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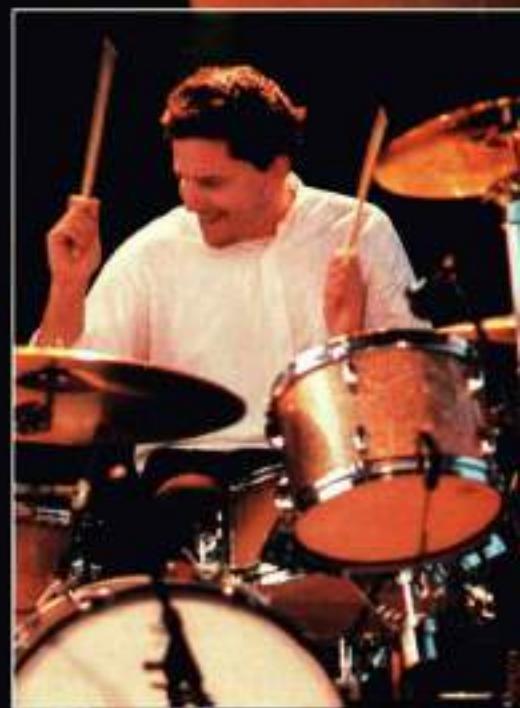
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## FEATURES

### EDDIE BAYERS

The biggest artists in country—Ricky Skaggs, the Judds, Vince Gill, Randy Travis, Rosanne Cash, Hank Williams, Jr.—can't get enough of the drummer with the golden (and platinum) groove. Find out why in this very special *MD* feature.

• by Robyn Flans

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### STEVE GORMAN

The Black Crowes' Steve Gorman might not have decades of experience, but this is one drummer who's put it all together real fast—and with a high degree of success. Learn what it takes to rhythmically propel one of today's biggest rock 'n' roll success stories.

• by Teri Saccone

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### LEWIS NASH

Only in his early 30's, Lewis Nash has supplied the pulse for some of the top jazz musicians of our time—Dizzy Gillespie, Ron Carter, Kenny Burrell, Branford Marsalis, Betty Carter, and Sonny Rollins, to name just a few. Check out what this intelligent and passionate skinsman has to say regarding the life and language of jazz drumming.

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## Something New And Notable



Ever since *MD*'s debut issue back in 1977, we've always reserved space for the announcement of new drum products and other items of interest to drummers. Those who go back a ways with *Modern Drummer* might recall that the department that covered this information was originally called *Just Drums*. However, since *JD* always seemed to include a bit more than "just drums," it was re-titled *New And Notable* in November of '87.

Interestingly, over the years, reader surveys have indicated that *New And Notable* has remained among the most popular departments in the magazine. And a more recent study once again demonstrated that *N&N* was still among the top five. In light of all this, we've decided to devote more space to the department. To accommodate the additional space requirement, we've begun by relocating the column from the very back of the book—where it's always been—to a position further forward. So beginning with this issue, *New And Notable* will run immediately following our *Product Close-Up* and *Electronic Review* departments. As a result, all equipment-related material will now be centralized in one section of the magazine, which will allow you to locate it more easily.

There are several other advantages to this design alteration. First, since we'll now be able to bring you more new product information in each issue, the problem of editorial backlogging will be eased. (Of all the departmental material published in *MD* each month, information earmarked for *New And Notable* tends to get backlogged more than any other column's.) Second, devoting more space to product press releases will enable us to report on new product information in a much more timely manner. And manufacturers, who've sometimes waited a couple of months for their product announcements to run, should be pleased that this time lag will be somewhat reduced. Finally, you'll notice that *New And Notable* will appear in complete editorial spreads, uninterrupted by advertising. This will enable us to run a greater selection of product photos in larger sizes.

Oddly enough, *New And Notable*—despite its popularity—has always had the appearance of filler material relegated to the back of the book. This minor redesign will help make the department a more intrinsic part of our editorial content, which it rightly deserves to be. We think that both readers and manufacturers will benefit equally from this format change, and we hope you agree. Take a look to see what we've done, and drop me a line.

RS

# MODERN DRUMMER

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## Poll Winners Respond

With deep sincerity, I wish to thank all those who voted for *Roll The Bones* as the "Best Recorded Performance" in this year's Readers Poll. It is always the greatest honor to be appreciated by other drummers, but I am especially proud of this recognition for my most recent, and perhaps hardest-won, piece of work. I put a lot of thought and sweat into that record, and consequently this appreciation from other drummers means a lot to me.

The first time I appeared in the *MD* Readers Poll—many years ago now—I felt the most intense mixed emotions: a strange combination of exaltation and unworthiness. No other award would ever equal that first one, as I'm sure anyone can understand. But still, the thrill of pride doesn't really fade. Even after 25 years of playing drums—and the good fortune to have been appreciated for it—I remain humble before all the master drummers of the past, present, and future. And though I've learned a *little* bit about drumming, there's still so much more to know. We can all be inspired by those masters to work toward more knowledge, greater accomplishment, and true excellence.

While searching for a capsule definition of "excellence," which is described by Robert Pirsig as "quality" and by Aristotle as "*arete*" I tentatively defined it as "doing something well enough that other people who do it admire your work." I think that nails it reasonably well—for a drummer, a bricklayer, or just a life well-lived. And certainly my own quest for excellence continues. While fully aware of all my faults, in music and in life, the eternal consolation is: "Hey, at least I'm getting *better!*" I happily remain a "work in progress."

And so, for all these reasons I very much appreciate this honor from the readers of *Modern Drummer*. I thank you sincerely, and send you all my favorite salutation: "Happy drumming!"

Neil Peart

Toronto, Ontario, Canada

I want to express my sincere delight and surprise at the results of the Readers Poll

for 1992. My wife told me the news just as I was getting ready to board a jet for the long trip home after a European tour; she thought the news would cheer me. It certainly did that, but it was also humbling, and served to remind me just how much more there is to learn about drumming and jazz. I thank you all very much, and will do my best to deserve the honor.

Peter Erskine  
Santa Monica CA

I would like to express my deep appreciation and gratitude to the faithful readers of *Modern Drummer* for voting me into the recent Readers Poll. It is so very reassuring to be recognized by one's peers. All the long hours and hard work were truly worth it all. I am both flattered and encouraged by this great honor. Thanks so much!

Milton Sledge  
Nashville TN

## Desperately Seeking Cliff

Sometime in the middle to late 1940s the Slingerland drum company made available a series of 8x10 glossy photos of famous drummers. Included was Cliff Leeman, whose photo was inscribed "Cliff Leeman, 100% Slingerland Radio Kings." My framed copy of this classic was lost during a move some years ago, and I am most anxious to acquire another copy. If any *MD* reader can assist me, I would be extremely grateful.

H. L. Cover  
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## How Loud Is Loud?

Richard Watson's review of the Boom Theory *Spacemuffins* in the July 1992 issue was timely, informative, and well-written. I would, however, like to clarify some of Mr. Watson's comments regarding volume levels. Mr. Watson tells us that the *Spacemuffin* kick drum might be falsely triggered by stage volume exceeding 90

dB. He then says: "With prolonged exposure to 90 dB, I, for one, wouldn't be able to hear the drums for all the blood spurt- ing from my ears, so this wouldn't be much of an issue to me."

As some of *MD*'s readers may already know, volume is measured in decibels (dB) of Sound Pressure Level (SPL). An SPL of 90 dB will certainly *not* cause one's ears to bleed and could roughly be compared to the noise one hears in heavy traffic (with trucks and busses) or a subway train. The typical amplified band easily cranks out between 105 and 115 dB SPL, and a loud rock band might push an onstage SPL of about 125 to 130 dB SPL. A volume level of 120 dB SPL is considered the "threshold of pain"—the level where the average person begins to experience discomfort. For a person's ears to bleed, the SPL would have to be well above 150 dB, which is the volume level where permanent damage to the hearing starts to happen. (Please keep in mind that I am in no way advocating these types of SPLs.)

The bottom line is that since 90 dB SPL is *often* exceeded on stage, some drummers will experience false triggering with the *Spacemuffins*. However, I am confident that designer Al Adinolfi will come up with a solution.

Steve LaCerra  
Engineer/Instructor  
Center For The Media Arts  
New York NY

## Thanks For The Tips

I recently received the June issue of *Modern Drummer*. I immediately opened it to the *Drumline* section and started reading. I found a lot of great tips in this issue—as I have with others in the past. I just wanted to say "thanks" to everyone who has shared these "homegrown" tips to keep the *Drumline* section going strong.

Joe DelBalso  
Kirtland OH



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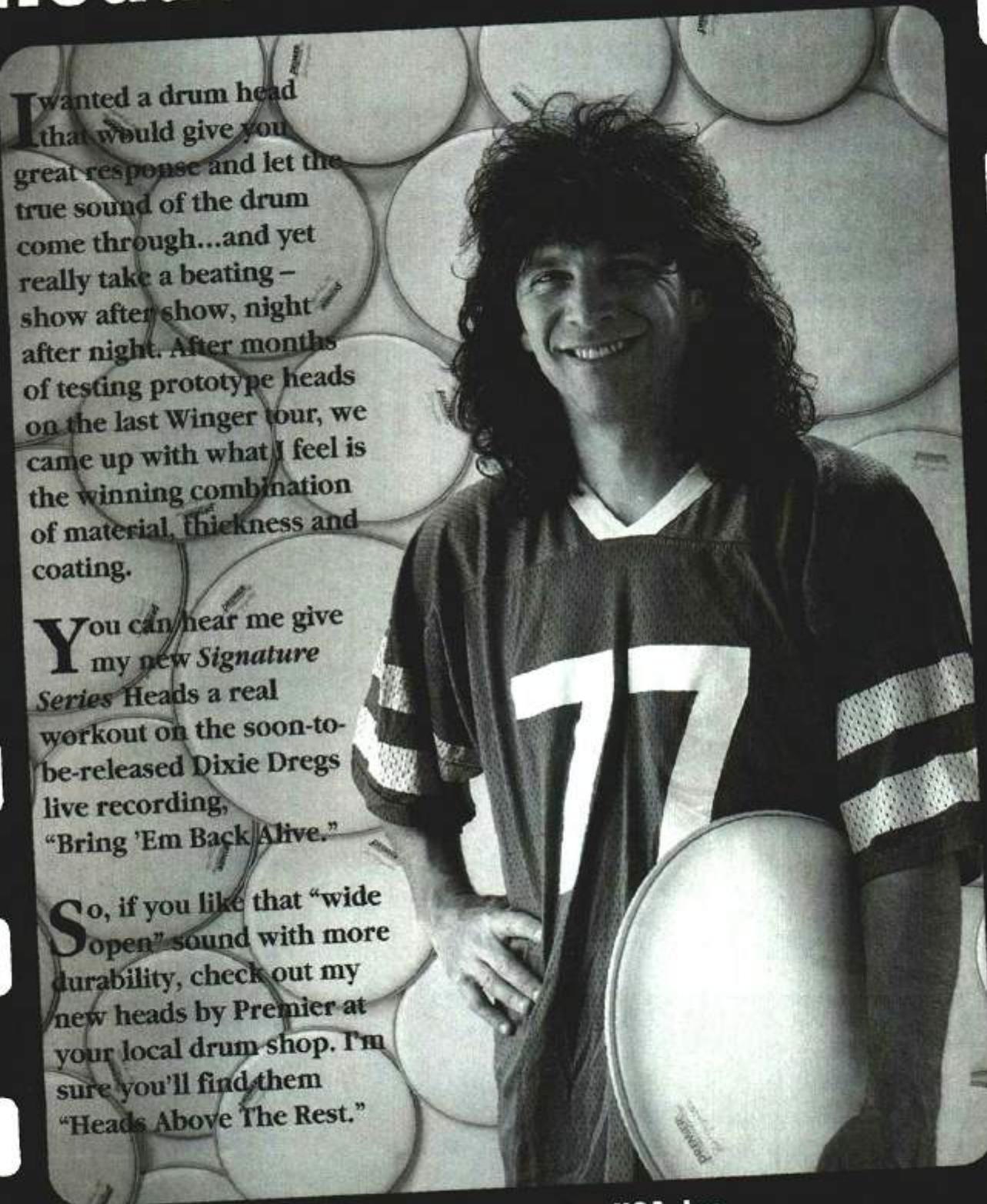
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## Jason Bonham

Though it's only been a few years since Bonham's *Disregard Of Timekeeping*, a lot has changed for the band's drummer, Jason Bonham. He's gotten married, bought a rambling old farmhouse in England, and taken up the glamorous hobby of carefully overseeing his vast garden. It's not what everyone might consider living life in the fast lane.

But even though he's been leading a somewhat calmer domestic life, Jason and his band have not kicked back in any sense. *Madhatter* is their new release (which they began working on only eight weeks after wrapping up their last tour), and besides taking their sound several

steps beyond their last outing, the group has also learned to work together much more effectively. The result of their long touring is evident on the new release. "After doing about three hundred shows together," says Jason, "we all grew up a lot in the way we wrote songs, coordinated it all, and put the album together with our producer, Tony Platt. We now sound so much more like a band. I think we got older and wiser."

*Madhatter* was recorded in an old church on the south coast of England. "It was converted into a studio," Jason explains, "and where I was playing the drums was where the congregation used

to sit. It was so big and ambient—one of those rooms that you want to take everywhere with you, because the drums sound great without doing anything to them."

Though it bears Jason's surname, Bonham the band is very much a "group" effort. Still, the onus of their success and failure is always squarely resting upon Jason's shoulders. "I think it's because of the name of the band," Jason agrees. "But most of the decisions are made democratically, and each member has an equal part."

• *Teri Saccone*

## Eric Singer

Eric Singer feels as much a part of KISS's past as he does part of its future. "I grew up with the band," says Singer, who became the band's third drummer shortly after Eric Carr died of cancer late last year. "I was aware of KISS when they first came out, and I saw them on their first tour, with the New York Dolls. So when I actually became a member of the band, it seemed real natural."

Singer, who most recently did two Alice Cooper tours after membership in the short-lived Badlands, first gained an inroad with KISS when he played on Paul Stanley's solo club tour in 1989. He says he's happy to have helped smooth things out for KISS during an otherwise trying period in the band's life and contribute to its latest record, *Revenge*, which Singer calls "the heaviest KISS record in years."

"There's a pressure in replacing someone who's been in a band as long as Eric was," Singer says of Carr. "And it's even more pressure when that per-

son has died. But I just wanted to fit in stylistically and personally and make the transition as easy as I could for everybody. I did the record first, as a studio drummer, before they actually asked me to be in the band. So I wanted to sound like a drummer from KISS should sound."

*For Revenge*, Singer says he learned and cut the songs in three weeks. "From what the other guys have said," he explains, "a lot more work and effort went into this record than any they've done in the past few years. It was real tough at times, because we were literally adding and changing parts in the middle of recording the songs. It was very demanding, but it was fun, too, and the results speak for themselves."

• *Matt Peiken*



# Michael Foster

Firehouse is a platinum success story, with their second effort, *Hold Your Fire*, poised to outsell even their 1990 debut album. All of this has been somewhat of a surprise for drummer Michael Foster. "When that album came out in September of 1990," he begins, "at first, nothing much happened. The record company released a heavy song first, 'Shake And Tumble,' but they decided to hold back a little because it was getting so close to the end of the year, which is the time when a lot of releases come out. In the beginning of 1991, 'Don't Treat Me Bad' came out and just took off. All of a sudden, after being out for several months, one of our songs rose to number 19 on the charts! From there, the album went gold, then platinum. We really didn't expect the first record to be so well received."

Foster, who grew up in Richmond, Virginia, listened to a whole lot of Elvis due to his parents' rock 'n' roll influence. Not surpris-

ingly, Michael admired the talents of drummer Ronnie Tutt. "He was one great drummer," comments Michael. "I also sang a lot as a kid, mostly to Jackson 5 records, and now I get to sing a lot and play the drums in *this* band." (Four-part harmonies are a Firehouse specialty.)

Michael laid down his drum tracks pretty quickly on *Hold Your Fire*. "It took a day and a half," he says. "The whole album was done much more spontaneously than the first one, because these songs were written while we were on the road last year. With the first album, we had tried to get a record deal for five years, so we had played those songs for a long time before recording them. With the new album, I hadn't heard a lot of the songs until the last minute. This time it's cooler, and everything is really fresh."

• **Teri Saccone**

# Paul Garisto

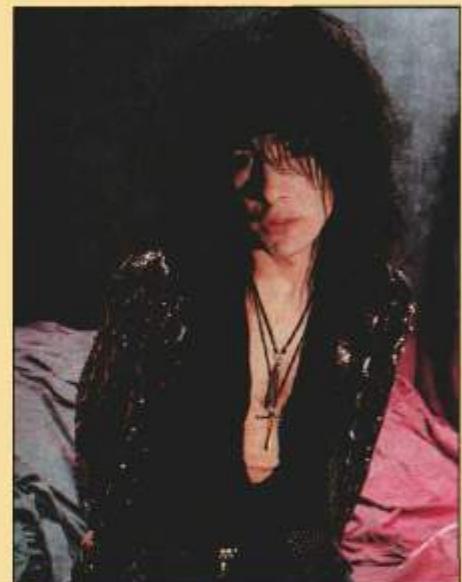
A new band, Shooting Gallery, features the drumming talents of Paul Garisto, who previously recorded and toured with both Iggy Pop and the Psychedelic Furs. Shooting Gallery boasts Garisto's always strong and imaginative one-two punch drumming style, plus ex-Hanoi Rocks guitarist Andy McCoy, whom Paul met when they played together with Iggy Pop a few years back.

When Shooting Gallery was put together, Garisto was ready to commit himself to a long-term project. "I felt the chemistry was incredible with us," he says. "It just clicked from day one, so I gave up everything in New York, and here I am. I'm not really crazy about living in L.A., but I'm very happy with my work, and that's all

that matters with me. My heart's back on the East Coast, but you've got to make sacrifices. I keep busy in the 24-hour rehearsal warehouse we rent. I play drums four to five hours every day, no matter what. I never had this opportunity in New York City."

Once Shooting Gallery was solidified, Paul declined other opportunities so that he could focus on the band's self-titled album. "I believe in this band," he says. "Although I've had offers of tours and recordings, I've turned them down because I didn't want to get caught up in a mercenary situation. I wanted a home, and to me that means a band."

• **Teri Saccone**



## News...

**Joe Franco** is out on tour with Widowmaker, supporting their new release.

**Billy Ward** can be heard on the new Teri Nunn LP. He is also currently working on the new Chris Whitley album.

**Phil Taylor, Mikkey Dee, and Tommy Aldridge** are on the new Motorhead album.

**Rikki Rockett** in the studio with Poison.

**Jamey Pacheco** on tour with Babylon A.D., supporting their new album, *Nothing Sacred*.

**Blas Elias** on the road with

Slaughter.

**Louie Weaver** on Petra's new album, *Unseen Power*.

**Will Calhoun** can be heard on the upcoming Living Colour album.

**Denny Carmassi** in the studio with Heart.

**Ed Mann** recently finished tours with Rickie Lee Jones and the Repercussion Unit.

**Billy Drummond** and his quintet have a new release out, *Native Colours*. Billy has also been on the road with Benny Green and with Buster Williams' quintet.

**Rich Wright** is in the studio

with Tattoo Rodeo.

**Clint de Ganon** is now working with Chuck Loeb. He can also be heard on recent releases by Mitchel Forman, Devonsquare, Dave Friedman, and the Bob Smith Band.

**Jim White** has joined the Maynard Ferguson band.

**Adam Nussbaum** has been keeping very busy of late. He's been playing festivals in Canada and Europe with Niels-Henning Orsted Pedersen and with Carla Bley's very big band. Adam is particularly excited about a new trio he's put together with John Aber-

crombie and Dan Wall. Keep an eye out for their new ECM release.

**Omar Hakim** now working with Lionel Richie.

**Jonathan Feinberg** now playing with They Might Be Giants.

Our best wishes to **Hugh Wright** of Boy Howdy for a speedy recovery. As of this writing, Hugh is in serious condition due to injuries sustained in an accident. You can write him care of SICU-C, Parkland Memorial Hospital, 5201 Harry Hines Blvd., Dallas, TX 75235.



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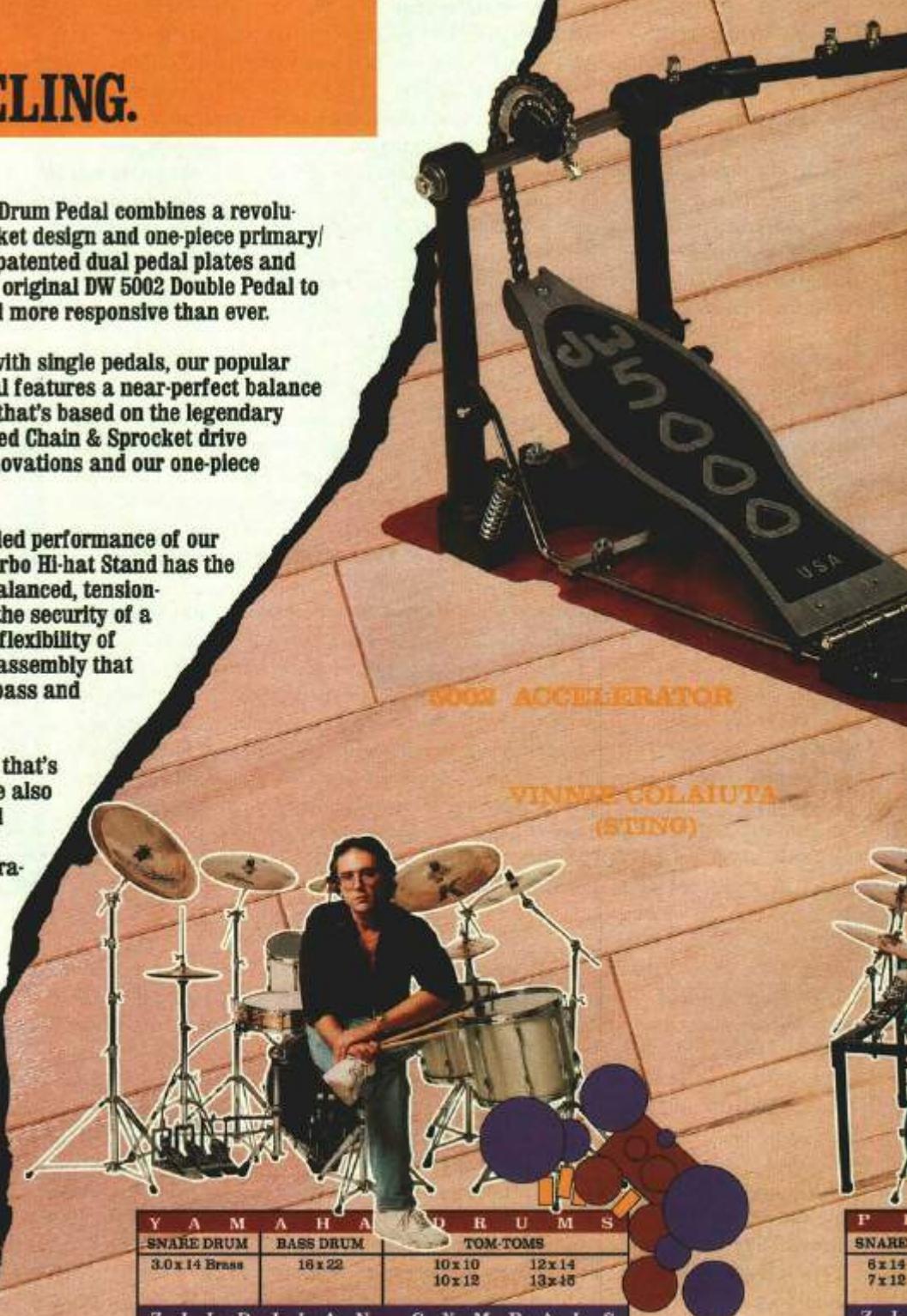
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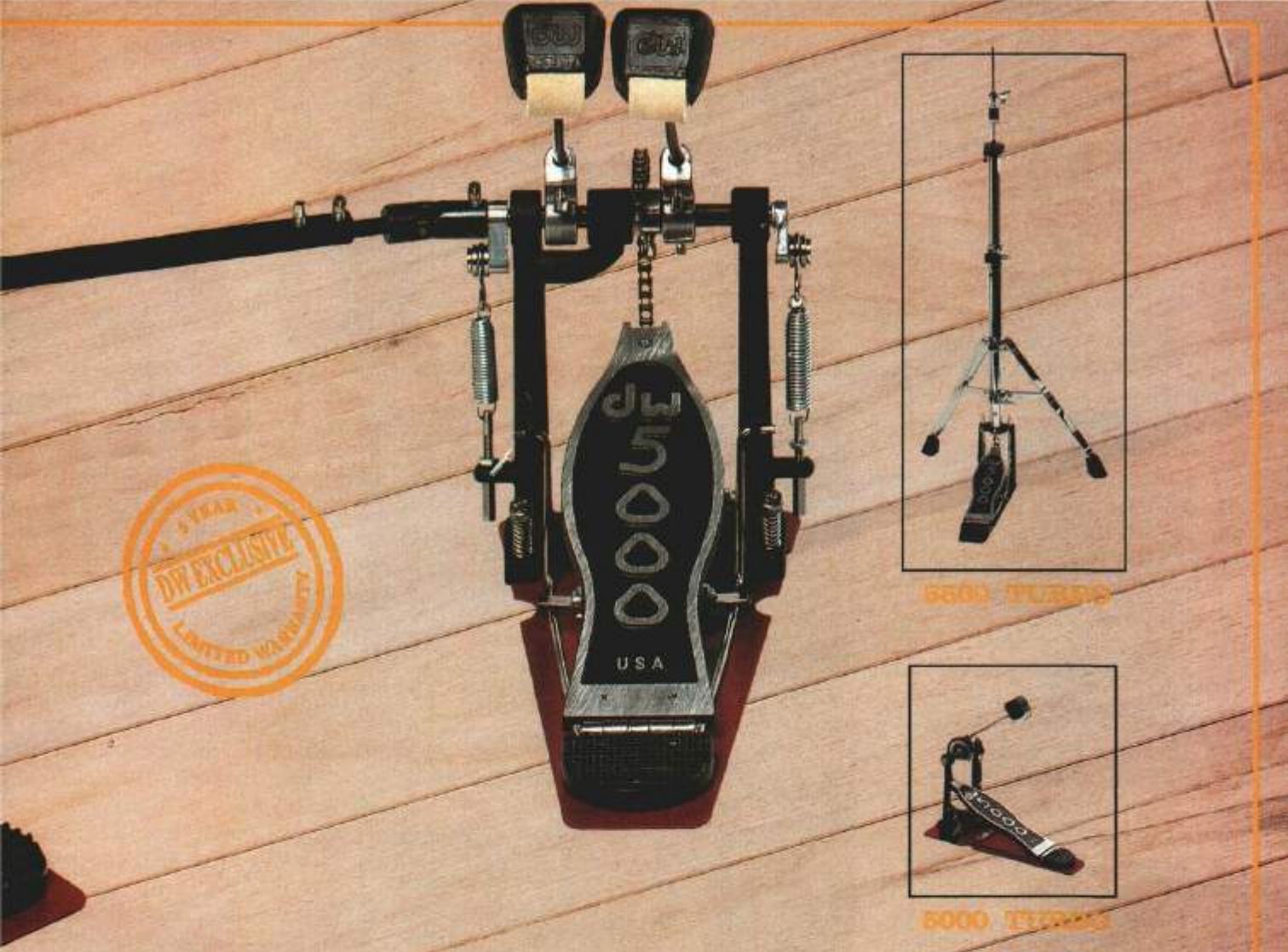
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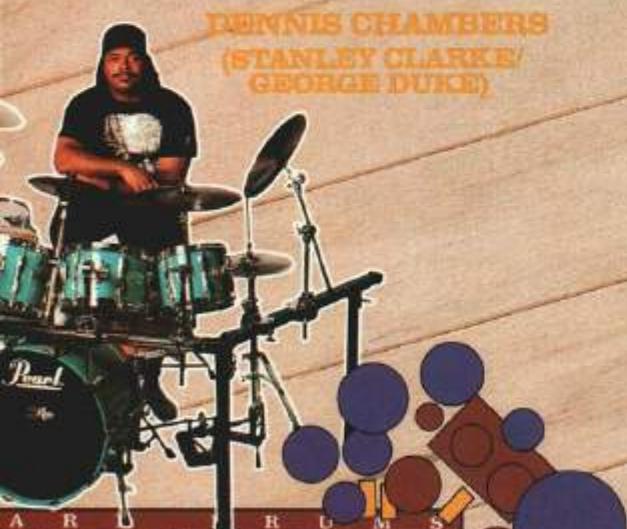
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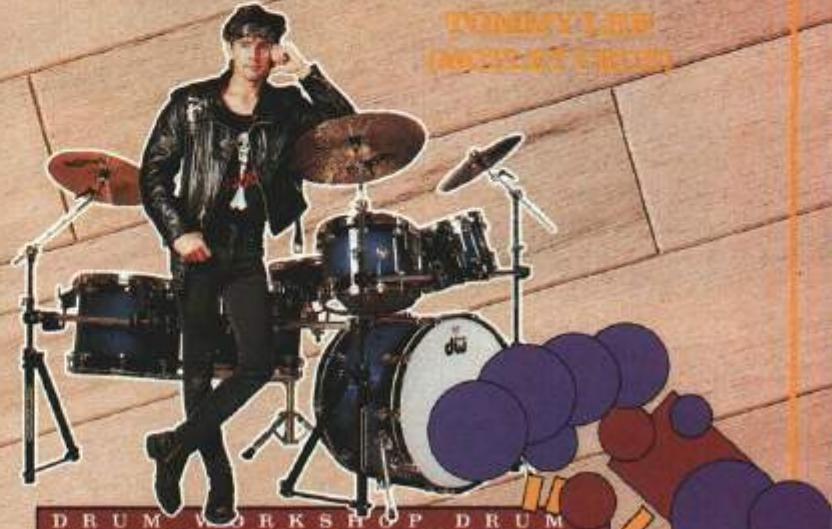
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D R U M W O R K S H O P P E D A L S			
BASS DRUM		HI-HAT	
5002A Double BD Pedal		5500T HH Stand	



## Jim Keltner

**J** You are my favorite drummer for several reasons: I like the way you place the drums in the music you play (the groove and time), and I also love the way your kit sounds. I've heard you on records with John Hiatt, Ry Cooder, the Traveling Wilburys, J.J. Cale, and Lonnie Mack. Are there some older pieces that I am missing? And could you suggest some of your recent work that reflects your unique approach behind the kit?

J.F. Pardis  
Lac-Megantic, Quebec, Canada

**A** I'm very flattered by your comments, but it's difficult for me to answer questions like yours, because I've just done so many things over the years that I've liked—along with quite a few things that weren't exactly my favorites! But I do have a few suggestions.

A record that very few people have heard—because it was totally ignored by the record company—but on which I really enjoyed playing is called *Pat McLaughlin* (Capitol, 48033). It was released in early 1988. The two songs I listen to all the time from that are "In The Mood" and "Moment Of Weakness." Pat's style is hard to pin down, which is what made working on the album so much fun. The two songs I did were sort of like a small big-band feel,



Photo by Jack White

Little Village, and includes Ry Cooder, John Hiatt, and Nick Lowe. Look for it!

but played by a four-piece rock group!

Of all the tracks I've played on, one of my favorites is from *Rufus, Featuring Chaka Khan* (ABC records, back in the mid-'70s). The song was called "Dance Wit' Me." My name isn't on that record. Andre Fisher was the drummer in the group at the time, but he broke his thumb and asked me to cover for him. That song became the hit from that album.

More recently, I'm really happy about a lot of the stuff I played on a Los Lobos album called *The Neighborhood* (Slash/Warner Brothers)—particularly the title track and a song called "Jenny's Got A Pony." I also split Elvis Costello's last album with Pete Thomas. There's not a lot of real "drummy" stuff there, but it's a pretty good example of how a drummer needs to know when *not* to play. Finally, I recently did an album of my own, which was described in the cover story on me in *MD*'s December '91 issue. The band is called

## Vinnie Paul

**V** Your playing with Pantera is astounding! I've never heard a drummer with such blistering rolls and intricate grooves. How do you produce your lightning-fast double-bass patterns? Are your pedals tight or fairly loose? What kind of cymbals are you using? Finally, what sizes of drums and kinds of muffling do you use?

Scott Shirk  
Marietta GA

**A** First off, Scott, thanks for the compliments. I started playing double bass when I first saw Tommy Aldridge play with the Pat Travers band. He was a big influence on me. I spent a lot of time working on my stamina back then by starting off slowly. I would play 16th-note grooves 20-30 minutes a day,

gradually building up speed every couple of days until the stamina of my left leg matched that of my right. My pedals are fairly tight, because I use wood beaters and Danmar *SuperRock* pads on my kick drums, and I want the beaters to rebound quickly.

I use Sabian AA cymbals because they sound great and are the only cymbals I've found that can take the abuse I give them every night. My drum sizes include two 24x24 kick drums, 14x14 and 15x15 rack toms, an 18x18 floor tom, and an 8x14 snare. I use Remo clear *Pinstripes* on all batter heads and Ebony *Ambassadors* on the bottoms, except for the snare, where I use a white Remo *Falam-K* batter. All the drums are wide open, with no muffling except on the kicks, where I use Remo *Muff's*.

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*Dave Tough. Max Roach.*

*Kenny Clarke. Art Blakey. Philly*

*Joe Jones. Roy Haynes. Gene*

*Krupa. Buddy Rich. Louie Bellson.*



*The A Zildjian*

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*Erskine. Neil Peart.*

*Steve Smith. Vinnie Colaiuta.*

*Gregg Bissonette. Dave*

*Weckl. Dennis Chambers. These*

*are drummers whose creativity,*

*innovation and talent formulated the very essence of*

*what drumming is. And what we at*

*Zildjian find particularly gratifying is, that as varied as*

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*play or played A Zildjians. Why A's? To begin with, the*

*A (named for the original Zildjian genius,*



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## Full-Frontal Bass Drum?

I'd like to know about the advantages and disadvantages of using a full front bass drum head. Also, what are the best ways to mike a bass drum with a full front head, in both live and studio playing situations?

Mike Dmytriw  
Cleveland OH

**A** A full front bass drum head allows the drum to resonate to its maximum capacity, and produces what is normally referred to as a "boomy" sound. This can contribute to depth and "bigness" in the bass drum sound. It can also produce a tremendous amount of "ring" in the drum, which must be dealt with according to your taste and the acoustical requirements of your playing situation. Various muffling devices (such as pillows, blankets, Remo *MuffIs*, or *Deadringers*) can be used to control the amount of ring.

Using a full front head also reduces the amount of air escaping from the drum (as opposed to the amount that can escape from a hole cut in the front head) and thus reduces the amount of "punch." If you are playing unmiked and this reduced punch is a problem, you can compensate somewhat by using a hard (wood or plastic) bass drum beater or a hard impact pad on the drumhead to increase the impact sound.

When miking a bass drum with a full front head, it's generally best to mike both the front and back heads. The front mic' is normally positioned a foot or two in front of the drum, so as to allow the drum's sound to develop fully before it reaches the mic'. The back mic' is normally pointed toward the beater-impact point. This maximizes the amount of attack picked up by the mic'. The two mic's can then be mixed to give the desired blend of depth, resonance, and attack. This system works equally well for live or studio applications, but the choice of mic's may differ owing to differences

in ambient-noise levels on a live stage and feedback resistance between different microphones. Discuss your particular needs with a qualified pro sound technician or salesman to determine the best choice of mic's for you.

## Why Are Recordings So Flawless?

When you hear recordings on the radio, they're meticulously flawless—even on complicated drum parts. Are they editing out flaws and splicing the correct riff in where mistakes are made? Surely these drummers are making *a few* mistakes—aren't they? I've been playing for years, and I feel I'm onto some of the "secrets" of the great drummers—but seldom can I play a track without a flaw or two. I've never recorded, and thus I know nothing about it. Is it my inherent lack of talent—or is it Memorex?

Pat Sweeney  
Nashport OH

**A** Rest assured, drummers who play on recordings certainly do make mistakes—whether they are band drummers cutting an album or veteran session drummers laying down jingles. But today's studio technology allows them the luxury of overdubbing, re-tracking, and even "punching in" certain parts where errors have occurred. Obviously, bands, producers, and clients want their finished products to be the best performances possible, so the "flawless" nature of the material you refer to is the result.

On the other hand, some groups today tend to shy away from the "overproduced" nature of recording, preferring to track more or less "live in the studio" to give a natural, human quality to their songs. You can also go back a few years—to the days before studio technology was as advanced as it is now—and hear less-than-perfect performances on studio recordings. And for yet another perspective, check out some of the classic live albums, on which the drummers were recorded true to their original per-

formances. (Some newer live albums unfortunately do feature a certain amount of studio re-working after the fact.) Albums that immediately come to mind include Cream's *Wheels Of Fire* (Ginger Baker), Three Dog Night's *Live At The Forum* (Floyd Sneed), Vanilla Fudge's *Near The Beginning* (Carmine Appice), Tower of Power's *Live In Living Color* (David Garibaldi), CSN&Y's *Four Way Street* (Johnny Barbata), and Chicago's *Carnegie Hall Concert* (Danny Seraphine). There are hundreds of others, on which you can hear great drummers playing for real—mistakes and all.

## Who Makes A Hoop-Mount Cymbal Holder?

is there a company that currently manufactures a cymbal holder that clamps onto the bass drum rim, similar to the way cowbell holders do?

Brian Hill  
Mission Viejo CA

**A** Yes, there is. The Ludwig hardware catalog lists the *L-1370 Hoop Mount Cymbal Holder*. Check with your local dealer to order the item for you.

## How Should A K Custom Cymbal Be Cleaned?

I recently purchased a 20" Zildjian K Custom ride cymbal. In light of the cymbal's unlathed surface, are there any special steps I should take to clean it? I'm sure that handling and smoke will necessitate this eventually, and I would hate to damage the cymbal unknowingly.

James Osborne  
Windsor, Ontario, Canada

**A** According to Zildjian's Lennie DiMuzio: "You may find that it takes a little more effort to clean a K Custom cymbal, because it doesn't have the smooth tonal grooves that other types have. But no special steps are necessary, other than a little elbow grease—and

continued on page 68



# VATER IS ON A ROLL

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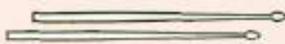


The CZX Custom kit above is in Semi-transparent Sequoia Red. For more information about the Pearl CZX Series see your local authorized Pearl dealer.

The purpose of this department is to provide an avenue of communication directly between the consumers of drum and percussion equipment and those who design and manufacture that equipment. We invite all MD readers to respond to the questions presented; a representative selection of responses will be printed in a following issue.

**July '92's question:**

**Does the variety of selection and the manner in which percussion products are displayed in the retail store influence your decision whether or not to buy, or do you tend to buy what is available based on your immediate need?**



I am not an impulsive consumer, so I do not buy things because of an interesting display in a store. The products I use are determined by the characteristics and quality of the items versus price and availability. I usually go to the music store to replace a worn-out part or upgrade my drumset. I do not rely on in-store displays to expose me to new products. By subscribing to industry magazines such as *Modern Drummer*, I am aware of them before retail stores stock the merchandise.

Sy Seyler  
Gaithersburg MD



I do all my equipment shopping via catalogs. In the area I live in, most music and so-called "percussion" stores seem to have a no-hands-on policy, and give poor service to shoppers. It seems like if they don't know you, they won't even wait on you.

Chuck Ankrom  
Columbus OH



I tend to buy what is available. The music stores that are the closest to where I live do not stock a wide selection of drum equipment. When I order anything from them, it takes months to get it—or they can't get the item at all. They carry the same stock all the time, so I've started mail-ordering out of catalogs. I get what I want—but again, it takes time.

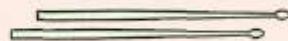
Robert Richmond  
Ottumwa IA



I think retailers should make an effort to get accessories off of their shelves and integrate them into drumsets on the showroom floor. Often, when drummers go to the local music store to get supplies, they already have an idea of what they need—so new gadgets and products become a blur on the rack. Even if one does take time to explore the accessory rack, it can be difficult to visualize the products on the working drumkit. If these

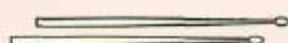
products were displayed in the context of a kit, the customer might gain a better understanding of them and realize the benefits they could offer.

Terry Stowers  
Dubuque IA



In many retail percussion stores I've visited, the variety of selection is limited, and new products are nowhere to be found. Also, drumsets are usually stacked in nice, vertical piles or adorned with "do not play" signs if set up. If I can't try the equipment before buying it, I'll shop mail-order, where the prices are lower and the selection is better.

Terry Stedman  
Lee Center NY



Deciding what equipment to buy is much easier if you can actually see it set up rather than stacked up in a corner.

Jason Clary  
Moore OK



When it comes to immediate needs (in the case of sticks or heads) I sometimes have to get what's immediately available. With other percussion products, however, I usually know exactly what I want, and if I don't find it displayed, then I'll order it. Of course, a good display will influence my decision to buy, but usually only on a whim. And at today's prices, that doesn't happen too often!

Mike Tierney  
Sandy OR

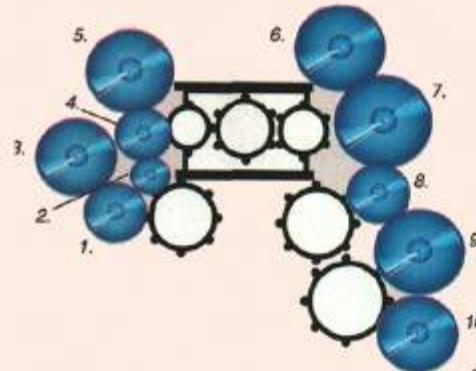


**This month, we're changing our Liaison format from a specific question to an "open forum." Over the years, readers have sent us numerous letters describing their personal needs for a new type of product—or a variation on an existing one—and wondering whether or not anyone made such an item. So, this month we're giving you the opportunity to address your inquiries directly to percussion manufacturers by "filling in the blank" for the following statement:**

**"I wish that the percussion industry made...."**

**Send your response to Liaison, *Modern Drummer* magazine, 870 Pompton Avenue, Cedar Grove, NJ 07009. Please limit your response to 150 words or less, so that we may have the opportunity to print as many responses as possible.**





## ALVINO BENNETT

"They're slammin' - and that's no hype. They speak 4 themselves. Oh yeah...remember 2 vote!"

### Cymbal Set Up

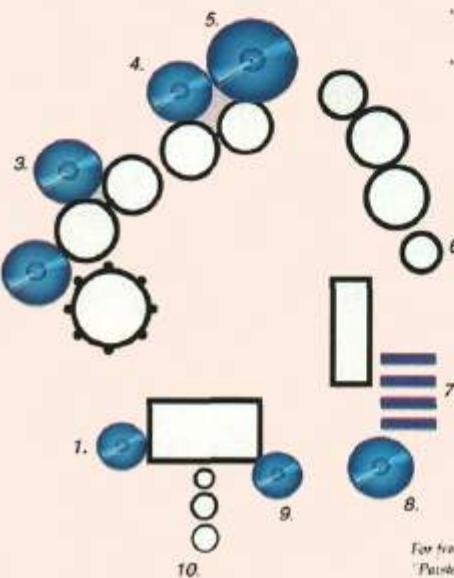
- 1) 13" Paiste Line Power Hi-Hat
- 2) 8" 602 Bell
- 3) 18" 3000 RUDE China
- 4) 12" Paiste Line Splash with 8" Paiste Line Splash on top, inverted.
- 5) 19" Paiste Line Power Crash
- 6) 20" Paiste Line Full Crash
- 7) 21" Paiste Line Dry Ride
- 8) 13" Paiste Line Dark Crisp Hi-Hat Bottom - 2 for Hi-Hat
- 9) 20" 3000 Novo China
- 10) 18" 2002 Flat Ride

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### Cymbal Set-up

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- 2) 15" 2002 Crash
- 3) 15" 602 Paperthin
- 4) 14" 602 Paperthin
- 5) 20" 2002 China
- 6) 6 & 3/4" Rotosound Discs
- 7) #1, 2, 3, 4 Sound Plates
- 8) 14" Series 500 Band Hand Cymbals
- 9) 10" Accent Gong
- 10) #1, 2, 3 Sound Disc



## LOU MOLINO

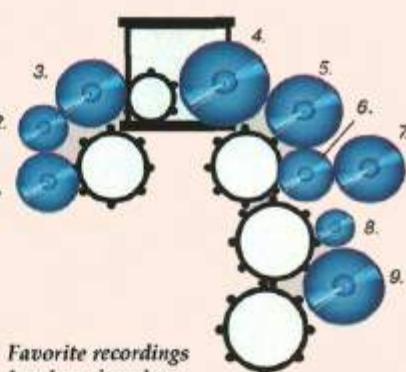
"Pure, silvery, hi-fi, unique... I could think of a million different ways to describe the beauty of a Paiste Cymbal, but just as important are the people behind the product. They listen to their artists as well as their cymbals, and believe in both."

### Cymbal Set-up

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- 2) 10" Paiste Line Splash
- 3) 16" Paiste Line Full Crash
- 4) 20" Paiste Line Dry Crisp Ride
- 5) 17" Paiste Line Full Crash
- 6) 12" Paiste Line Heavy Hi Hat
- 7) 16" Paiste Line Thin China
- 8) 8" 602 Bell
- 9) 18" Paiste Line Full Crash

### Favorite recordings

- Lou has played on:
- "Can't Look Away" Trevor Rabin
- "Cock Robin" Cock Robin
- "Rockland" Kim Mitchell



### Favorite recordings

- Alvino has played on:
- "Shine On" L.T.D.
- "Angel Coast" Tim Heintz
- "Jungle Fever Soundtrack" Stevie Wonder



## RICKY LAWSON

"Paiste Cymbals are the best quality, the best sound, for today and the future."

### Favorite recordings

- Ricky has played on:
- "Tutu" Miles Davis
- "Brazilian Serenata" Dori Caymmi
- "Collaboration" George Benson / Earl Klugh
- "I Would Do Anything For You" Kenny Loggins
- "Leap Of Faith" Anita Baker
- "Shades" Yellowjackets
- "Touch The World" Earth, Wind and Fire
- "Emotional" Jeffrey Osborne

### Cymbal Set-up

- 1) 13" Paiste Line Heavy Hi-Hat
- 2) 17" Paiste Line Full Crash
- 3) 16" Paiste Line Full Crash
- 4) 20" Paiste Line Dry Ride
- 5) 16" Paiste Line Full Crash
- 6) 20" Paiste Line Thin China

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# Nashville's Finest Eddie Bayers

By Robyn Flans

Photos by Rick Malkin

Doctors told Nashville session ace Eddie Bayers that he'd never play again because of the injuries he had sustained in a motorcycle accident. It was August 26, 1986, and Bayers had just come from setting up some of his sounds for John Dittrich to use on a Restless Heart album, per the request of producer Scott Hendricks. On his way home, a motorist ran a

red light, resulting in an accident that left Bayers unconscious for an hour. The doctor in the emergency room diagnosed a concussion and a broken wrist and prescribed six weeks rest.

Although he didn't think the situation was exactly thrilling, Bayers figured that the six weeks might make for a nice little vacation. But the first doctor told Eddie to see a specialist

who was considered an expert in the field. That doctor took one look at the x-rays and said, "Sorry, I can't handle this. You're a mess."

The next expert, Dr. Frank Jones, informed Bayers he'd have to have an operation on his left hand. Pins were inserted, and every month for eight months following the operation, they'd take the cast off, re-x-ray him, and put it

back on. It was a rough time for Bayers—but, he says with pride, the Nashville community rallied on his behalf.

"I was going in the hole bad. My disability insurance only covered the house note and electric, which was \$1,000 a month. Obviously that doesn't take care of bills, food.... All of a sudden, checks were coming in for me at the union. A lot of the artists were



allowing my name to be signed on their sessions, even though I wasn't there. Ricky Van Shelton, Michael Murphy, the Judds, Rodney Crowell, and Rosanne Cash—and the producers, like Steve Buckingham, Kyle Lehning, Steve Gibson, and Harold Shedd—were all allowing this to go on. Obviously, that was a saving grace for us—and very moving, too."

In the eighth month, Rodney Crowell called and told Bayers, "Man, I don't care if you have a nub, I want you to play on Rosanne's album." Bayers went into his music room, put the sticks between the two exposed fingers next to his thumb, and experimented trying to do any single-stroke roll he could.

"I realized I could make it work since I

play open-handed," Eddie says. "I didn't start off playing that way, but certain things just felt more comfortable to me. I had nobody there to tell me I was doing it wrong. I just dealt with the *feel*. And I later found out that that's all the producers want, too."

So Eddie went in and cut *King's Record Shop*, of course with the aid of technology. "I also did a

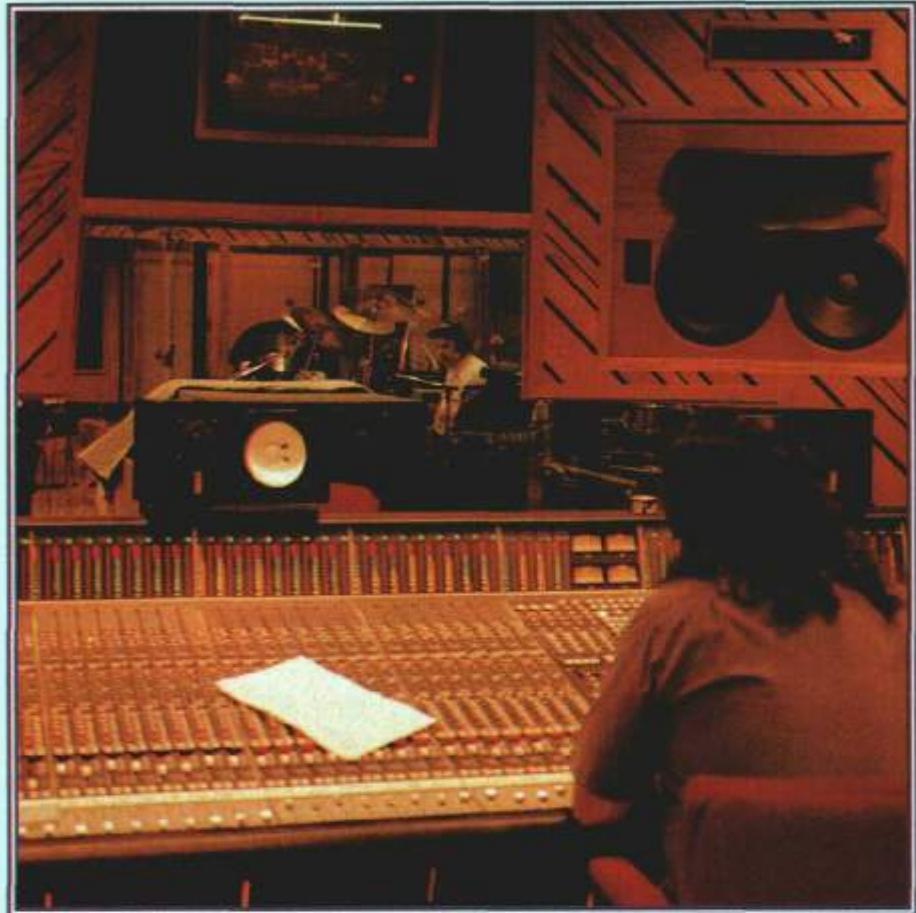
Judds album, a Michael Murphy album, and a Ricky Van Shelton album with the cast on. I believe a lot in faith. I don't know if there's any rhyme or reason why things happen or how to justify them, but I do believe in having faith in yourself. There's a lot you have to do for yourself. You can't just belly up and cry to God, 'Save me, help me.'"

**S**o much for never playing again. Since the accident, Bayers has had some of his biggest years. For instance, he has won the *Music Row* magazine Drummer of the Year award three years in a row. It's an honor Eddie is particularly proud of, because it is based on record sales, which, to Bayers, is the bottom line, not popularity. In fact, Eddie has recently added his 80th platinum album to his collection of gold and platinum records, and he remains one of the busiest—if not, *the* busiest—session players in all of country music.

But adversity has not been a stranger to Bayers. In 1966, just as he was graduating high school in Nashville, Eddie lost his mother and sister in a car accident. He recalls that he "sort of flipped out," and journeyed to Philadelphia, where he—then a keyboard player—worked with a lounge act. Then he trekked to Las Vegas, where he worked with the Checkmates, Ltd. for about a year.

Bayers' next stop was Oakland, where he had his first studio experience singing backup on the Jefferson Airplane album *Sunfighter*. While there he also worked at Fantasy Records with Tom Fogerty. In 1973, however, Bayers decided to return to Nashville. He lived in his car at a rest stop off I-40 and showered in local truck stops, until he could afford to call for his wife and daughter, who had remained in New Jersey with his parents-in-law.

"At that point, being married and having a child, I knew what the bottom line was," he says of his first marriage. "No matter what I did, the support of my family was it." Eddie recalls that his first job was working in a warehouse at Dixie Record Pressing. He got a second job at Southern Plastics to supplement his income, until he secured a job as keyboard player in a band at the Carousel Club. That gig turned out to be Eddie's first and last job playing keyboards in Nashville. His life changed radically when, at 25, Eddie was inspired to play drums by the



drummer in the band, Larrie Londin. For about a year, Bayers trained under the best, until he landed a job as drummer for a popular Top-40 band called the Mercy Blues. He continued to work his day job as well, until he met up with some people at a studio called Audio Media.

"They were just starting and were doing very low-budget sound-alikes. I went in and said, 'I work at night at this club, and I'm working during the day at this factory, but if you let me work here, I'll work for free, just to do all the studio work that you have.' So I worked for free for about a year with little compensations here and there, but nothing on a regular basis."

It was a philosophy that Bayers maintains today, and one he says accounts for his success. "On a new artist, I'll play for free. If they have a budget, fine, but if someone of the caliber of the producers I work for calls and says, 'I've found this girl,' or 'I've found this guy,' it's, 'When

are we going to do it?'" Before, a lot of people who had achieved their double scales felt, out of courtesy, that it was best not to take those things, because if they booked that and then someone called with a major album to do, they'd have to cancel. But to me, that kind of job is as sacred as a paid session. The Judds, Alan Jackson, K.T. Oslin, and the Sweethearts of the Rodeo—and now Trisha Yearwood—started out as demos."

And with his success, Bayers strives to help others. His concern for younger players has lead to many a drummer getting an audition with one of Bayers' studio accounts. The greatest gratification came a couple of years ago, though, when he was able to use his notoriety to help save a life. A local couple contacted Bayers because their baby was dying of a liver disorder. Eddie was able to organize celebrity benefits to raise enough money to provide the baby with an operation. One of his greatest joys was when

the family surprised him and brought the baby to Eddie's birthday party last January. According to Eddie, "It makes me feel good that somehow I'm able to make a difference."

**RF:** I'd like to play artist association with you. Tell us what comes to mind about the artist, the music, and the sessions. Wynonna Judd.

**EB:** Wonderful. I got to be there from the very first Judds demos that became records. And the rest was watching a ten-year span of stardom.

**RF:** How about her recent solo album?

**EB:** Gratification on my part, because initially, when they went in to cut the album, they hired someone else, just because they thought it would make her record sound different from the Judds. When I was doing Lionel Cartwright's album, [producer] Tony Brown told me they had brought someone else in for Wynonna's album, but that after the first day she wanted him fired. The drummer came in wanting to do the great job I'm sure he is capable of doing. But I think sometimes when certain people come into Nashville, they think they're coming in with a little more than what Nashville is used to. The cut they were doing happened to be a song that I had done with the artist who wrote it, Brendon Croker. There were things that I did that you might term, I guess, mine.

**RF:** Like what?

**EB:** Like the hi-hat being very simple. The feel might have been a regular rock feel, but the hi-hat was doing a pattern that wasn't normal. And so they wanted the song just like that, which can create a little bit of weirdness. Willie Weeks and I went in, and it just clicked. It was great because I got to prove I couldn't be typecast into any one sound. I went from the Judds sound, which a lot of times was a deep snare and an almost folky approach, to being aggressive and using more aggressive sounds with Wynonna. What we did with Wy was totally different.

**RF:** Vince Gill.

**EB:** Funny. We've known each other so long, and I worked on stuff he did six or seven years ago, waiting for his

time. And that happened when we did *When I Call Your Name*. Prior to that, it was almost a joke, because we were cutting great records on him, and he was obviously singing no differently than he does now. But politics, labels, and ideas in A&R hindered him from doing a lot of his own music. When we did *When I Call Your Name*, those were all his own songs. But apart from that, he's just a very witty guy. The first thing we'll do when we see each other is exchange jokes.

With Vince, you're going to see more of a variety as far as deep- to high-pitched snares, because he does a lot of different types of songs that require different dynamics and sounds. Usually, though, I use the same equipment from session to session. The thing that changes is attitude. When I do an album I try to wipe the slate clean; I take no preconceptions into the session. I let the artist's music and direction dictate what happens. It's a feel that moves me to do a certain thing that is almost subliminal. When I go

in, I get a basic drum sound. I don't have anything in mind until I hear the first song, and then somehow, something takes over.

**RF:** Rodney Crowell.

**EB:** Pots and pans. That's what he likes. You can forget any conventional sounds as far as drums or how you might do something. The first thing he told me was, "I don't want you to play drums; I want you to play pots and pans." I guess what he's saying is "Let's be organic." If we were children sitting in the living room and pulling out pots and pans to play with, it would be very primitive. He likes that concept to be there. I have what I consider to be great-sounding snares, but I pulled out an old snare for him that had a very ambient ring to it. You hear the snares, but then it just rings. That was radical, and he liked it that way.

**RF:** Is that for Rosanne Cash, too?

**EB:** Rosanne will vary. *King's Record Shop* was more commercial, but then I did an album with her called *Interiors*, which was almost "play drums by

## Eddie's Kit

**Drumset:** Remo MasterTouch in gold finish

A. 5 1/2 x 13 snare drum  
B. 10 x 10 tom  
C. 12 x 12 tom  
D. 16 x 16 floor tom  
E. 16 x 22 bass drum

**Cymbals:** Zildjian

1. 14" New Beat hi-hats
2. 18" K crash/ride
3. 20" A heavy ride
4. 17" A medium-thin crash
5. 16" K crash

**Hardware:** All Remo

**Heads:** Remo coated Ambassador on snare, clear Emperors on tops of toms with clear Diplomats on bottoms, Power Stroke on bass drum batters with blanket inside for muffling

**Sticks:** Zildjian 5A with nylon tip

**Electronics:** Akai 950 sampler, Simmons V brain, ddrum 1, Roland MC 500 sequencer, Proteus I, Alesis HR 16b

hand." I hit the snares and toms with my hands, as if I were playing congas. I'd turn the snares off and use the snares as a hand snare, playing rhythms on that and then adding little shakers and things like that. There were about two or three full kit songs, but for the most part, it was using my imagination for sounds and rhythms. There were times I would use a mallet and a stick on the snare to create a rhythm.

**RF:** What about that huge hit she had, "Tennessee Flat Top"?

**EB:** That was done strictly in the traditional feel with brushes, but the sound was more aggressive. The feel and spirit was in every way the way her father [Johnny Cash] had originally done it.

**RF:** How was that obtained?

**EB:** I think that was just in the perception of listening to the original and then seeing how we could update it with energy and technology, but still keep the same soul, which I think was totally accomplished. The song has everything to do with approach, though. So many things come into play with today's standards, especially when you like many different types of music. My inspirations run the gamut from Mitch Mitchell with Jimi Hendrix, to Billy Cobham with the Mahavishnu Orchestra, to Mick Fleetwood on *Rumours*. I think I incorporate all of that into my playing.

RF: Hank Williams, Jr.

**EB:** Fun and wild. Obviously his image would seem to make his music some of the most radical that I do, but I entered his career when we did "Tear In My Beer," which was an old acetate that his father had done but that had never been released. We transferred it over to a Synclavier, cleaned it up, and layered parts on top of that. I did the drums first, and then everyone put their instruments on afterwards. From then on, I think he began mellowing out—although when we go in, we look to have a party as far as the playing goes. He projects that on to us, and then it's anything goes, from

rock to heavy metal sounds, you name it. I use a mixture of samples to enhance certain toms, snare, and kick. We cut in a bigger room, and we really use a lot of the room miking, so we open up the ambience.

RF: Randy Travis.

**EB:** Randy is sort of where all this started. He's the innovator of the new breed. That was all a phenomenon to us. And this was right after we had taken a lot of criticism from places like *USA Today*, saying how country music was in a slump.

**RF:** What was it like in the studio with Travis?

**EB:** The producer, Kyle Lehning, is the one responsible for a lot of the production. We are lead by him, even what he wants snare-wise. He's also a very capable engineer. He will have written ideas that he wants to hear on each specific song—not note for note, but ideas.

RF: Ricky Scaggs.

**EB:** Spiritual. In everything he does, he uses his spiritual beliefs—not to the point of TV evangelism, but in a real positive sense, like in caring. He has lead us to a new bluegrass kind of feel with aggression. He's also got pretty preconceived ideas about what he wants. We'll run it down a couple of times, but then he'll start telling us. We just have to listen and be prepared for anything, from brushes, to hand drums, to popping snares. The new record is certainly more aggressive than Ricky's done in a long time. It allowed me to play a little heavier.

**RF:** Delbert McClinton.

**EB:** I needed to think everything *but* 2 and 4. There were New Orleans kinds of things where I had to do almost cadences. They were very uptempo. I could think percussively, not only rhythmically. I would play the snare with the snares off, timbale-style. It

## Mr. Hitmaker

To show you just how many hit albums Eddie Bayers records, here's a recent *Billboard* Top Country Album chart. This particular week Eddie was on 27 of the top 75 records!

© 1992 BPI Communications. Used with permission from Billboard.



covered a lot of ground.

**RF:** What was the situation with James Taylor?

**EB:** We had brought James in to do a cameo on Mark O'Connor's album, two records ago, on an old children's song called "Old Blue." All I played was a snare with the snares off, conga style—hand snare. I think the whole chemistry of that band enthused James. He felt it was a whole different approach from what he normally used with electric guitars and basses. We used Edgar Myer on acoustic bass, and he liked the treatment of that.

Mark always went to the Telluride Bluegrass Festival, and he said to James, "You ought to go out and do that. You'd be surprised how large this thing is, and it would certainly be something new." We've done two of them now. The whole treatment of all James' music done in this fashion, to me, brought back the intimacy of

where he started. I'm playing full kit, but it's very low-key. Automatically his songs take on a whole new life.

I love playing live with James, but I have learned that as long as I'm going to be in the studio, I need to *stay* in the studio. I can't go out. I was offered Steve Winwood's *Higher Love* tour, but I felt it would be tough going out for six months as far as my family is concerned. The other side of that is that players have come back from the road and said they've felt the effects of it. I've found that if I'm not available to do a particular album and they have to call someone else, and the album makes it, then I've lost the next one, too.

**RF:** While we're on the topic of specifics, one particular record that you did comes to mind, "That's That," by Michael Johnson. Tell us how that magic occurred.

**EB:** Things like that happen because

of the intimacy that goes on while the song is being cut—with the artist, producer, me, and keyboard player. That's all that was on it initially. We realized that the song was brilliantly written by Hugh Prestwood, but that it was in one of the 12/8 feels that you can turn around. You can make it a lot of different polyrhythmic things. When you hear it initially, you think you have the feel, but then something comes in later to tell you that it's not what you thought—which is what I thought was the mystique of the song. When you hear what finally comes in on the end, you're going, "Wow, that isn't where I was hearing it at all."

It's like, if you're doing a shuffle, you can do triplets against that shuffle, and that's the difference of the rhythm. If you listen to the triplets and take away the shuffle, all of a sudden you hear straight fours. With them together, you can see where you can work with both

*continued on page 72*

# STEVE GORMAN



## A MUSICAL COMPANION

With his close-cropped hair, big sunglasses, and classic old Gretsch kit, Steve Gorman is beginning to resemble Charlie Watts in at least one of his many incarnations these days. Although the Black Crowes have been cited as evoking the Stones (and the Faces) on their second and monstrously huge release, *The Southern Harmony And Musical Companion*, that's where the similarity to Watts ends.

As a drummer, Gorman has ripened since the Crowes struck platinum with their debut *Shake Your Money Maker*. As the band surges forth with an even deeper expression of blues-influenced, two-guitar harmonic rock, Steve's playing has vaulted to a higher appreciation of hot, in-the-pocket R&B drumming, which is wall-to-wall on *The Southern Harmony And Musical Companion*.

The Black Crowes have always

displayed a penchant for drenching rock in the blues. But don't confuse the group with having any aspirations of being a blues band. "We really don't play blues," states Steve on a lazy hot afternoon near his home in Atlanta. "We've been tagged as a blues-rock band because we've talked about our influences and because certain songs we do have a bluesy feel. And we're certainly fans of the blues—you have to appreciate that type of music to get to where we are, since rock 'n' roll is such a derivative of it. But I'm certainly not a blues drummer. I go to blues clubs and see drummers and think, 'That has nothing to do with the way I play.' I have not been playing long enough to consider myself a blues player. I'm a Black Crowes drummer. This is really the only real band I've played with in my life."

By Teri Saccone



Photo by Neil Zlozower

One indisputable thumbprint of *The Southern Harmony And Musical Companion* is the inspired Motown feel, especially pertaining to Steve's drumming. "One of my favorite drummers is Al Jackson, who was a Stax player, not a Motown player. He played in Booker T. & the MGs. They did all the Sam & Dave and Otis Redding records, as well as their own records. Al also played on a lot of Al Green records in the '70s. To me, that guy is *the* greatest session drummer of all time. We met [famed MG bassist] Duck Dunn last year, who's our soundman's father, and Duck got up and played 'Hard To Handle' with us. I was sitting there going, 'Whoa!' I

pulled him over to a corner and said, 'Tell me about Al Jackson, I have to know!' He told me all these great stories.

I've had a lot of Stax stuff for years, and the more I got into playing, the more I realized how great he was. He wasn't the kind of drummer that you notice right off the bat: He was playing the song, and that's what you notice. So if what we did on this record makes you think of him, then it's a big compliment to me."

Steve has been playing for only six years. But in that short time span he has become a seasoned, tasteful drummer. Perhaps part of that maturity is linked to his knowledge of the

history of music and rhythm and blues. "I was twenty-one when I got my first kit," he recalls. "From about age six until twenty-one, all I ever did was listen to records and take everything in. I'd listen to every instrument, and drums were the one thing I knew I could play, if I was going to play anything. I just lived music, and every time I would get a new record, I would just eat it up, listening to it so much."

"It's funny," Steve laughs, "because I can go back and listen now to a record I have not heard in five or six years, and I hear stuff in the playing that I've obviously copped. Maybe it's a record that I last heard in high

school, and I'll realize, 'Aah! That's where that comes from.'"

Steve's musical tastes leaned toward mainstream rock and pop groups. "I won a Bee Gees album as a door prize when I was six," he says, "and that's when I decided I was going to be into records. Then one of my brothers gave me three Beatle albums: *Help*, *Rubber Soul*, and *Meet The Beatles*. That was it: I probably listened to those three albums all the way through, every day, for a year before it occurred to me to go and get some more records. That's all I needed. But I had two brothers who were heavily into music, and one was into Marvin Gaye, Al Green, the Temptations, the Isley Brothers, and the Spinners. The other one was into Yes, Pink Floyd, and Led Zeppelin, so they were polar opposites. We had all that on the stereo, plus my Beatle records, from about '71 to '75. I was listening to all that, and I was like a sponge for everything."

What was it that finally attracted Gorman to the drums? Well, Steve says it wasn't the lure of rhythms, the coolness of sitting behind a big bad kit, or the emulation of any one particularly enigmatic drummer. For him, choosing drums was strictly a pragmatic decision. "I just figured it would be the easiest thing to play," he remarks. "I had a brother who was about ten years older than me and played guitar, and I figured early on that he would need a drummer, not a guitar player. I also always wanted to play drums, but I guess I don't really know why. I always just felt that I would be able to play if I wanted to. The first time I ever sat behind a drumkit was when I was a senior in high school, and I just started playing."

Although not a technical player, Steve is nevertheless extremely accomplished, and perhaps readers may find his brief playing history unbelievable. "Yeah, I've gotten a lot of that kind of reaction over the last couple of years," he responds. "As weird as this sounds, I literally spent hours every day—for years—just thinking about playing drums, but I

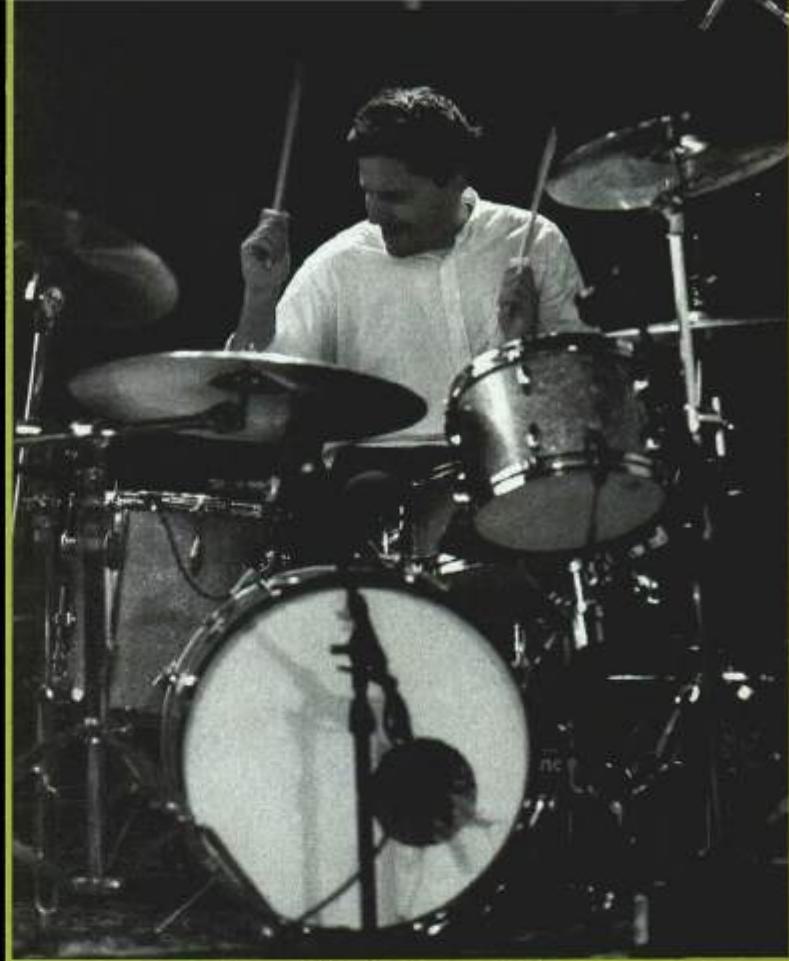
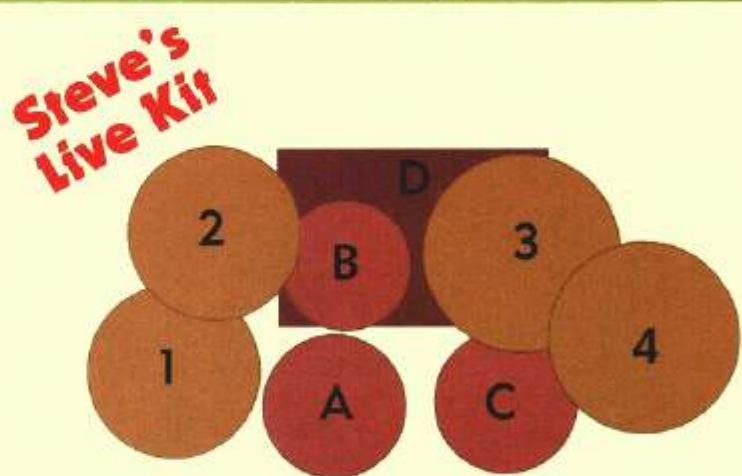


Photo by Neil Zlozower



**Drumset:** Pearl World series in gold/purple glitter finish

- A. 6 1/2 x 14 *Free Floating* snare drum
- B. 10 x 12 tom
- C. 14x14 floor tom
- D. 14 x 20 bass drum

**Cymbals:** Zildjian (all *Brilliant* models)

- 1. 15" *Quick Beat* hi-hats
- 2. 16" *A Rock* clash
- 3. 22" *A Ping* ride
- 4. 18" *A Rock* crash

**Hardware:** All Pearl, except for a Tama hi-hat stand and a DW 5000 bass drum pedal with a felt beater

**Heads:** Remo coated C.S. on snare (with no muffling), coated *Emperors* on tops of toms with coated *Ambassadors* on bottoms, clear *Emperor* on bass drum batter

**Sticks:** Pro-Mark 747 *Rock* model with wood tip

# Lewis Nash

## The Business Of Rhythm

By Ken Micallef  
Photos by Ebet Roberts

At RCA recording studio "B" the Jimmy Heath big band is getting ready to record. Heath, one of the smoothest tenor saxophonists of the last thirty-five years, has brought together the best musicians New York has to offer. At one end of the room, pianist Roland Hanna and trumpeter Lew Soloff talk shop. A few feet away, saxophonist Benny Powell—of Basie fame—talks to Milt Jackson, who is just hanging out, happy to see so many of his friends all in the same room. Jerome Richardson, Claudio Roditi, Billy Mitchell, Bill Easley...the place looks like an Academy Awards meeting for jazz musicians.

Lewis Nash sets up in the drum booth, rearranging cymbals while chatting with bassist Ben Brown. Finally, producer Bill Cosby (yes, Dr. Huxtable himself) walks in, puffing on a torpedo-shaped Cuban cigar. He walks around the studio, putting everyone at ease with his dry humor and jibing one-liners. He whispers something in Jimmy Heath's

ear, causing both of them to double over in laughter. Heath signals the band to get down to business.

After a breezy Latin chart and a ballad, the band attempts an uptempo swing piece. The first couple of takes are stiff. The solos are good, but not memorable. Cosby suggests a few changes to Heath, and the leader runs them down with Roland Hanna. By the fifth and final take, the band has suddenly hit their stride, the music leaping through the control room speakers like water avalanching over Niagara Falls.

Throughout the takes, Lewis Nash swings hard, snapping off staccato tom fills and unexpected rim shots. A particular spot in the chart calls for Nash to segue the band from section to section. In an eight-bar break, he has to make the transition from Latin to swing. Each time the break comes around, Nash pours on the energy, laying into the kit. He plays a different set of fills each time, becoming more aggressive with each take. Usually known for his crystalline cymbal playing

and refined touch, this is Nash kicking butt. He wallops the band with inventiveness, driving the rhythm section with an urbane, witty attack.

A few nights later at the Village Vanguard with tenor saxophonist George Coleman, Nash is back to a quartet format. Wearing darkly tinted glasses and his trademark kufi (and looking a bit like the wise old owl), he brings his archival knowledge of the instrument to bear on a hotbed of bebop. Listening intently with his left ear aimed towards the band, he accompanies with an almost New Orleans-ish sense of color and swing. It's just another week-full of work for Lewis Nash.

At 33, the Phoenix-born Lewis Nash has appeared on over fifty albums and has been a working member of groups led by Ron Carter, Branford Marsalis, Tommy Flanagan, Sonny Rollins, Don Pullen/George Adams, and Betty Carter. He has performed and recorded with Art Farmer, Toshiko Akiyoshi, Milt Jackson, Dizzy Gillespie, Clark Terry, and

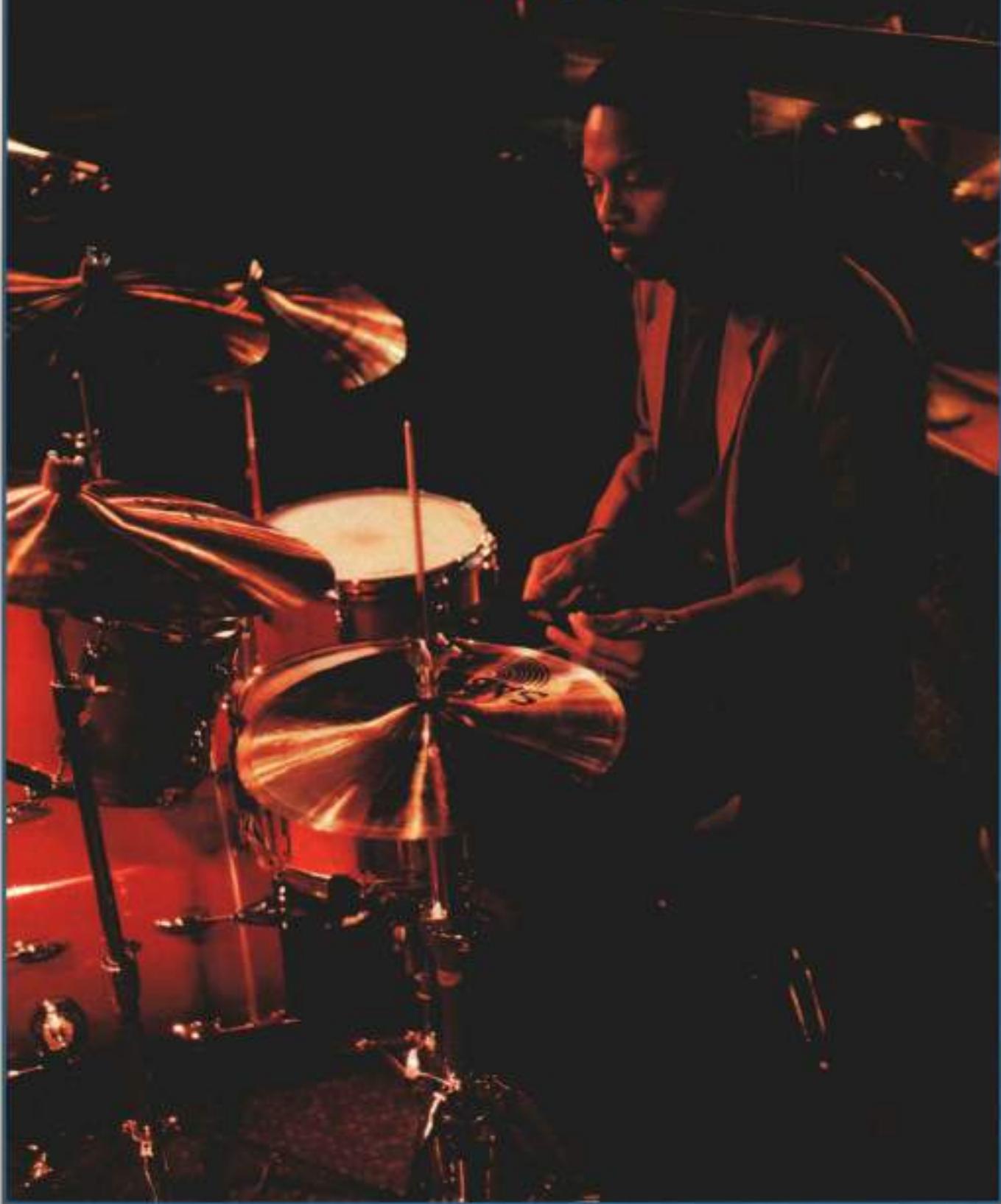
Kenny Burrell, among many others. In 1990, Nash released his first album as a leader, *Rhythm Is My Business* (Crown Records-Japan). And in October of 1992, you can catch Lewis on the Phillip Morris Superband World Tour.

At his home in Brooklyn, Nash's walls are lined with books. Philosophy, art, music, religion—he's well read, maybe even a book-worm. An honors student in high school and college, it's easy to see (and hear) that Nash has brought his academically inclined, probing mind to jazz drumming.

And the darndest thing is, he's getting better. Listen to Branford Marsalis's 1988 record *Random Abstract*—a fine performance to be sure—but then check out Nash with Don Friedman on '91's *Circle Waltz*. A new command propels his playing. More inventive, his sparkle enlivens the recording.

A sage once said: "Consistency is the hobgoblin of little minds." Let's hope that Lewis Nash's brain doesn't explode any time soon.

# FAT TUESDAY'S



**KM:** At Jimmy Heath's big band session, you were the youngest musician there. Why did you get called for the session when Heath could just as easily have used someone of his generation?

**LN:** Given what he heard me do in other situations, Jimmy thought I could bring something to the music. He called me based on a gig I did with him with Clark Terry for the New York Swing Dance Society. We had to play music for people to dance to. That was a gig where everybody had a lot of experience in big band situations.

Prior to that, Jimmy had only heard me in small groups. Maybe that's what perked his ear to the fact that I could deal with a real big band. Also, the older guys may not be as readily available anymore. There are guys who like to give younger musicians a chance to work in a rare medium like big band.

**KM:** What do you bring musically that would appeal to him?

**LN:** In a big band, the time has to be really steady. You've got sections, and you have to be able to hear them going

on simultaneously, juxtaposed to each other: the trumpets versus the reeds versus the bones. And maybe on the sax solo they want rim shots on 2 and 4 to keep it going, or they may need you to lay back on something. You have to be able to hear the band as a whole as well as listen to each section. Your time has to be solid, yet flexible enough to roll with what each section needs, to keep the feeling happening. You have to know how to set up the figures so that it's easy for everyone to come in when they're supposed to,

and you have to know how to hear the dynamics that may or may not be written into the music.

In a big band, the bigs are really *big*. In setting the changes up, you've got to know what *not* to play as well as what *to* play. You don't want to play fills that are too busy and intricate when all you need is a "bop!"—just a quarter note on 4 or whatever the figure needs. You need to get enough listening experience—it's hard to get enough *playing* experience—so at least you can remember what will work in



a given situation.

**KM:** At the level of player present at that session, do the horn sections still drag the figures?

**LN:** Yes. It doesn't necessarily mean there's a problem with the musicianship. The passage may be hard to finger at a certain tempo. When they can't hear the ride cymbal or the time clearly in their headphones, they may ask for more ride cymbal or hi-hat; then they're on it.

**KM:** Do a different set of rules apply when playing in a quartet or trio situation? Is swing the overriding factor?

tuning with a big band than I do with a trio. For big band, the sound is deeper, because you need some weight. The bass drum is bigger: a 20" tuned loose. I use an 18" bass drum when I play with a trio. The snare is about the same. Also, interaction with the rhythm section is always important. Just because it may be a bit louder in a big band setting compared to a trio, the relationship with the bassist's beat, the piano player's comping, and the use of dynamics, color, and shading are still essential.

**KM:** On one song, you

ing—I went into the triplet feel so the swing would already be in motion.

**KM:** How do the dynamics change in a big band?

**LN:** If there are big hits, the chart might *say fortissimo*; then I know that it's really big. All the horns are in there together. Then, of course, I'll be playing a lot harder than I would with a small group. They need that kind of support, that's why the drums are tuned deeper. So when you hit the drums there's some weight underneath the music. In general, and especially during the

problems, the guys don't come in properly.... When everything is together, it makes your job easier. These guys concentrate, and take after take they're consistent. You really respect that kind of intensity and concentration. And you better not blow it, because they're all depending on you.

**KM:** When you played with George Coleman at the Village Vanguard, the piano player and bassist changed during the two-week gig, right?

**LN:** The first week was with Benny Green on piano and David Williams on bass, the second was Jamil Nasser on bass and Harold Mabern on piano.

**KM:** Younger guys to older guys. Do you have to make any adjustment from player to player?

**LN:** In this case there wasn't a great difference, only because Benny Green and David Williams have such a grasp of the music, so there's not so much of a stylistic difference. I hate to break it up between young and old. In this case, that doesn't matter. It's just a difference in players. Just a difference in the way they feel the music.

**KM:** When you play a gig, live or studio, what are the first things to get in order?

**LN:** I make sure the drums are tuned the way I like them and that I'm comfortable in my setup. The first thing is I try to be on time! The next thing is, "How's the sound in the room?" You always have to play the room. In some rooms you can hit the snare drum and it bounces all over the place; sometimes it's dead. I'll see how that feels, what it means as to how I'll approach my touch on the kit. Then it's time to

## Nash's Stash

Here are the recordings Lewis Nash says best represent his drumming.

Artist	Album Title	Label/Catalog #
Tommy Flanagan	Beyond The Bluebird	Timeless SJP 350
Kenny Barron	Invitation	Criss Cross CC 1044
Clark Terry	Havin' Fun	Delos DE 4021
Branford Marsalis	Random Abstract	Columbia 44055
Lewis Nash	Rhythm Is My Business	Crown PAS 1004

And here are the albums Lewis lists as his top five favorites of all time.

Artist	Album Title	Drummer	Label/Catalog #
Art Blakey	A Night At Birdland	Art Blakey	Blue Note B21Y-46519
Miles Davis	Milestones	Philly Joe Jones	Columbia CK-40837
Miles Davis	Walkin'	Kenny Clarke	Fantasy/OJC OJC 213
Max Roach/Clifford Brown	Study In Brown	Max Roach	EmArcy 814646-2
Miles Davis	Friday Night At The Blackhawk	Jimmy Cobb	Columbia CK-44257

**LN:** I think about playing in a big band the same way I do a small group in certain ways: First and foremost, you have to swing as hard as possible—everything else will take care of itself. If the feeling is right, it makes all the accents and figures fall exactly into place. If it feels stiff or rushed, or if there's not enough energy, then that affects everything else.

Swing is a constant, but there are other considerations. I use a little different

played a driving triplet fill centered around a stick-on-stick rim click to segue the band back into the arrangement. It worked really well.

**LN:** The figure was coming out of a mambo feel, and after I played my eight-bar break, it's directly into swing. For the first four bars, I continued the Latin feel, gradually moving into more of a swing feel. To set up the swing feel so that it's obvious and clear to the horns—BAM, it's swing—

solo passages, it's the same volume as with a quintet. But the quiet parts are really soft and the loud parts are really loud.

To work with players who have this enormous amount of experience is very valuable. You hear the sections the way they're *supposed* to sound. Often, when you have an inexperienced band, you don't hear the chart conceptually the way the composer intended. You've got intonation problems, time prob-

continued on page 108



TAMA

# The Big Sound of the Small Jazz Kit...

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And just as jazz has always been the music of both change and sophistication, more and more virtuoso drummers are choosing Tama maple Artstar II jazz kits and Tama hardware to express their art.



*Rodney Holmes*

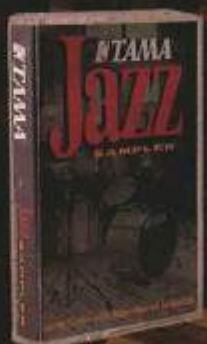
*"My Artstars are easy to record and easy to tune. The maple shells really project, but they also have a warmth, depth and tone which I think is pretty rare. I couldn't get that sound with the brand of drums I played before. The Lever Glide is great, really easy to control, good range and very smooth--sturdy but not too heavy. I've always used Tama hardware, even when I was using other drums. And now with the Silt tilting stands, I can always get the perfect angles even on really small stages."*

*Rayford Griffin*

*"I've had numerous compliments about my set not only because it sounds great, but because it looks great...very pleasing to the eyes and ears. Plus, it's versatile enough for anything from bebop to heavy fusion. And there's nothing more stable than the Tama Omnisphere tom-holder...easy to set up and no problems with positioning."*

*Joel Rosenblatt*

*"I love that the Artstars are maple; they've got warmth with attack, and the hi-tension lugs make tuning much easier. The hardware's great; it's easy to set up and adjust. And the Lever Glide hi-hat, well, there's just no comparison--I swear by it. I can do things with it I could never do before."*



Hear jazz artists extraordinaire Rayford Griffin, Rodney Holmes and Joel Rosenblatt playing Tama Artstar II drums on the new *Tama Jazz Sampler* cassette. For your free copy, plus a complete Tama catalogue package, send \$5.00 (\$7.00 in Canada) to cover shipping and handling to: Tama Jazz, Dept. MDD26, P.O. Box 886, Bensalem, PA 19020 • P.O. Box 2009, Idaho Falls, ID 83403 • In Canada: 2165-46th Ave., Lachine, Quebec H8T-2P1.

**TAMA**

# Gibraltar Stands

■ by Rick Van Horn

If you're in the market for new stands, Gibraltar wants to be your hardware company.

Let's be realistic: When it comes to the mechanical operations involved with playing a drumkit, your hardware takes a much greater role than your drums do. I'm not talking about sound here; I'm talking about the physical handling involved with setting up, breaking down, and positioning your drums and cymbals in "just the right places" for your playing comfort. I'm also talking about stability and strength—how the stands hold up to your playing, and whether or not they securely retain all the adjustments you've made so carefully. With this in mind, it behooves any drummer to be aware of new developments in the hardware field.

Enter Gibraltar, with hardware designed to offer the professional and semi-pro drummer virtually anything and everything necessary in the way of stands and accessories. I reviewed the *Gibraltar Road Series* drum rack system in the April issue of this year; this time we'll examine a selection of free-standing snare, cymbal, and hi-hat stands from three Gibraltar series.

## The 9500 Series

Stands in the 9500 series features double-braced legs, a two-position collapsible base assembly, and oversized *Super Lock* height-adjustment wing screws that clamp down on hinged nylon bushings. These are sizeable, solid-steel stands, and although Gibraltar's John Roderick told me that they're "built with mass in mind, but not built to be massive," I'd still categorize this series as

appealing to the heavy-duty player who needs heavy-duty stands.

Cymbal stands feature Gibraltar's new ball-and-socket 360° cymbal tilter, which allows for virtually infinite positioning of the cymbal. If you've ever had to fight a cymbal stand or boom with a ratchet tilter that just wouldn't get the angle you needed, you'll really appreciate this flexibility. The 9500 boom stands also feature two-point boom-

adjustment mechanisms, which means that you don't have to lose your angle adjustment in order to lengthen or shorten the boom-arm reach. The 9509L Long Boom that we tried featured a 2-tier telescopic boom with a reach of over 46". The nice thing about this boom was that it didn't include an overly large counterweight. (Thank goodness; it was heavy enough already.) The capability of the stand's legs to provide a very wide base eliminated the need for such a weight—even with a sizeable China cymbal extended quite high and far out on the boom. The Long Boom Stand is priced at \$139.50; the 9510 straight stand we tested goes for \$109.50.

The 9506 Snare Stand features an offset ball-and-socket tilting adjustment, which made positioning the drum at any angle a breeze. The stand is constructed so as to accommodate deep-shelled drums, and it provided solid and secure hold under any impact. You can't ask for more than that from a snare drum stand. It's priced at \$102.50.

The 9507 Deluxe Hi-Hat features twin external springs that are infinitely adjustable via small locking nuts on the top of each spring column. The base is "semi-movable," which means that it can



be rotated about 1 1/4" in either direction (to accommodate double pedals) before it bumps into the external springs. This is a tradeoff of positioning flexibility for tensioning flexibility. Personally, I prefer internal-spring hi-hats that offer totally rotating bases and are less likely to snag other stands in my trap case. (Gibraltar offers such a model in this series, by the way, as well as one in the 7500 Series that I'll describe later.) But this hi-hat also features fully adjustable pedal-board height—which can be a very nice comfort factor—and it certainly played smoothly and quietly. It also came with Gibraltar's 4420S *Super Clutch*, which uses a collar that pulls tightly *around* the hi-hat pull rod, rather than a wing bolt that pushes *into* it. I found this system very secure, and it didn't scar up the pull rod the way traditional clutches can. This hi-hat lists for \$149.50.

## The A.X. Series

Essentially, the A.X. series is an all-aluminum version of the 9500 series, with a few minor differences. Those include one-touch *Quick-Release* height-adjustment levers instead of wing nuts, differently designed rubber feet, and a brushed-aluminum finish (rather

than chrome). Other than that, the main difference is weight: stand-for-stand, A.X. stands weigh around 20% less than their steel counterparts. (For example, the AX06 snare stand weighs 6 1/2 lbs., the 9506 stand weighs 9 lbs.) If you're talking about several stands, you're talking about a substantial weight reduction. Of course, aluminum stands are slightly more expensive than steel ones (the AX06 lists for \$119.50) and you have to take a bit more care with them when packing up. But I certainly enjoyed having the size and stability benefits of "heavy duty" hardware without it actually being quite so heavy. In addition to the snare stand, we tested the AX09S Short Boom Cymbal Stand (\$129.50) and the AX10 Straight Cymbal Stand (\$114.50)—both of which feature the 360° tilters.

### The 7500 Series

Gibraltar's 7500 Series uses the same size vertical shafts, *Super Lock* height adjustments, and other functional features as are on 9500 Series stands, but replaces the double-braced legs with elliptical tubular legs. These legs offer good stability without an overly-large leg spread—making setups more compact—and reduce the weight of the stands slightly. Cymbal stands and booms feature traditional ratchet-style tilters—a cost-reduction factor that also reduces positioning flexibility—and the selection of boom models in this series is restricted to a Mini-Boom (\$109.50) and a Medium Boom (\$112.50).

The item from the 7500 Series that I liked the best among our test group was the 7507ML Hi-Hat with Moveable Leg Base. It features a completely rotating tripod and an internal spring whose tension

is controlled by a five-step rotating tension lock. I'm confident that most drummers could find a comfortable spring-tension setting among the five available; I tend to think that more subtle, "infinite" tensioning is a bit over-rated. This hi-hat also featured the nifty *Super Clutch*, and performed as smoothly and quietly as any drummer could desire. It's priced at \$124.50.

### Conclusions

Gibraltar's hardware is state-of-the-art, with a lot of thought put into its design. Their selection of sizes, models, and functional features offers something for everyone. And their prices are extremely competitive. If you're thinking of expanding your kit with a few new stands—or need to replace an aging veteran—you should definitely include Gibraltar equipment among your considerations.

## Sonor Force 1000 Kit

■ by Rick Mattingly

**For the first time, the words "affordable" and "Sonor" can be applied to the same product.**

Sonor has based its reputation on making high-quality drums, and they've made no bones about the fact that if you want Sonor quality, you should be prepared to pay top dollar for it. So when a company with such a philosophy finally releases a product in the "affordable" category, expectations are high. One realizes that corners have to be cut somewhere to keep the cost down, but one hopes that the company will find a way to maintain high standards even on a lower-priced kit. Sonor has achieved this

with the *Force 1000* drumkit.

We received a standard five-piece kit for review, consisting of a 16x22 bass drum, 10x12, 11x13, and 16x16 toms, and a 6 1/2x14 snare drum, plus bass drum and hi-hat pedals, a snare drum stand, and a straight cymbal stand. The set was finished in high-gloss black.

All of the drums are constructed from 9-ply cross-laminated poplar, and are made at the Sonor factory in Germany. The outsides of the shells are covered with celluloid, and the insides are painted. Bearing edges are cut to a 45° angle. The drums have tubular lugs of the same design as Sonor's *Force 3000* and *Force 2000* drums. The rack toms have six



each; the snare, bass, and floor tom have eight. They are attached to the shells at two points on the bass drum and toms, but at only one point on the snare drum.

The tension screws are the slotted type that require a Sonor drumkey (although you can also use a screwdriver, which is what I had to do since there was no Sonor drumkey packed with the set.)

The drumheads—which bore no names or logos—were coated on the batter sides and clear on the opposite sides, except for the front of the bass drum, which was black and had a large Sonor decal. Other than a ring taped to the snare drum head, there was no muffling whatsoever—no felt strips, no hole in the front of the bass drum, no internal mufflers. I expected, therefore, that the drums would be loud and very ringy. The bass drum met my expectations, but there was a sharp impact sound that cut through the ring, and it wouldn't take a great deal of muffling to get a very acceptable thud.

The toms, however, were much drier than I expected. They were not dead-sounding by any means, but there was plenty of impact and the tone died away rather quickly. A lot of drummers would probably be happy to use the toms just the way they come, without changing to different heads. The snare drum had a fat, meaty tone with good snare response. The strainer is the popular

drop-lever type, which is nothing fancy but does the job well.

The same can be said for the Taiwanese hardware that accompanies the *Force 1000* kit. It is simple in design and is all single-braced, but it is quite sturdy and functional. The bass drum and hi-hat pedals are both chain-drives; the hi-hat has one fat chain, the bass drum pedal has two thinner ones. Both pedals are smooth and quiet. The snare stand is sturdy and flexible, and has large rubber arms to hold the drum. The cymbal stand goes as high as I can imagine anyone wanting a cymbal stand to go. While this isn't the ultra-sophisticated hardware found on top-line Sonor kits, it's certainly not junk.

It's the relationship between the drums and hardware that distinguishes the *Force WOO* kit from other comparably priced sets. With most of the ones I've seen, the best thing about them is their extremely sturdy, double-braced hardware. The drums, by comparison, are merely adequate. Sonor, on the other hand, has put more emphasis on the drums themselves—offering much higher quality than is common for a set of this price. They make up the difference by supplying lighter-weight hardware. (I

should point out that this "lighter-weight" hardware is thicker and heavier than what was considered heavy-duty in the '60s—and drummers did just fine with that stuff.)

While I would characterize the *Force 1000* kit as basic, no-nonsense drums and hardware, there are a few touches that I would not necessarily expect to see on "affordable" kits—such as memory collars on all of the stands and holders, toe stops on the bass and hi-hat pedals, rubber insulators where the lugs attach to the drumshells, and nylon washers between the tension screws and the rims.

Based on the sound and workmanship of the *Force 1000* kit, I would rate it as a low-line professional kit rather than a top-line student set; it's certainly good enough to go out and play gigs with. The price puts it in the "affordable" category as opposed to "budget": A five-piece kit with hardware lists for \$1,295. You can buy it without the pedals and stands for \$1,200. There is also an add-on tom pack consisting of 9x10 and 12x14 toms plus a double tom holder and boom cymbal stand for \$525. Besides black, the *Force 1000* is also available in white or red.

## Duratech Drumsticks

■ by Rick Mattingly

Even though I stuck with wooden drumsticks after synthetic sticks were introduced a few years back, it was more out of habit than philosophy. So when I received several pairs of Duratech sticks for review, I was happy to try them out. Pulling out a practice pad, I tried out the four models that had been sent, looking for the pair that felt the closest to the wood 5As I'm used to. In fact, the Durat-

ech 5A was very close indeed. It wasn't exactly the same, but if you tried 5As from, say, Vic Firth, Calato, Pro-Mark, and Rimshot, each of those would feel a bit different, too.

Playing on the pad, I was favorably impressed by one thing right off the bat: In terms of pitch, the two sticks were absolutely identical. Thinking that I might have simply been lucky, I checked the pitches of the other three pairs. While each pair had its own pitch, due to the difference in size and weight, the two sticks of each pair matched perfectly. I generally use a practice pad to work on *Stick Control*-type exercises, in which I'm trying to get my hands perfectly even. Sticks that are not pitch-paired drive me nuts in that context, so I was delighted to find two sticks that sounded exactly the



same.

A few nights later I took the Duratechs to a gig with a reasonably loud rock band. I must confess to wishing that the 5As I received had not been from the company's *Designer Series*, which features bright colors (in this case, blue) set off by white stripes. They are somewhat flashy for my conservative taste.

But the finish is durable. After using them for a couple of sets, there was no visible wear. More significantly, one of my students has been using a pair of Duratechs for several months, and while the finish has worn away somewhat in the area where he hits rimshots and strikes the edge of his hi-hats, overall the sticks look much newer than I know them to be.

Back to my gig. In order to have a basis for comparison, I used my regular wood sticks for the first set, switching to the Duratechs after the first break. It was a rather muddy-sounding room, with a lot of carpeting and a low, sound-absorbing ceiling. I really appreciated the brighter

sound of the Duratechs on the ride cymbal and hi-hats, and rimshots sounded especially resonant—perhaps due to the sticks being hollow. Whatever the reason, I liked the sound the sticks were making.

Now for the bad news: Stick shock was very pronounced. Wood has the capacity to absorb a lot of the shock caused by impact, but synthetics conduct much of that shock into your hand. I was taught to release on impact and to achieve volume through velocity rather than through brute strength, so the effect was probably not as extreme as it could have been if I had been holding the sticks tighter and colliding with the drums rather than letting the sticks rebound off of them. Still, in the heat of a fast tempo while cracking rimshots, my technique isn't always flawless in that regard, and I was definitely feeling the shock of the blow in my wrists.

By holding the sticks more loosely than normal, I was able to reduce the shock somewhat. Perhaps if I were to use synthetics all of the time, I would be able to

adapt my technique so that I would not feel so much shock, but the fact remains that synthetic sticks do not absorb shock the way wood does, so one has to take that into consideration. Synthetic stick manufacturers brag about their product's durability, the implication being that they are ideal for drummers who hit hard. But these, in fact, are the players who need to be most careful in using them.

At this point I can only recommend the sticks with this reservation: One must beware of the potential danger from the shock of the impact. With proper technique, however, this may not be a problem at all. Other than that, the sticks felt good in terms of balance, and they sounded good as well. And for those who value pitch-paired sticks, Duratechs are right on the money. There are a variety of finishes to choose from besides the *Designer Series*, so whether you are flashy or conservative you should find a color to suit you. List price is \$9.95.

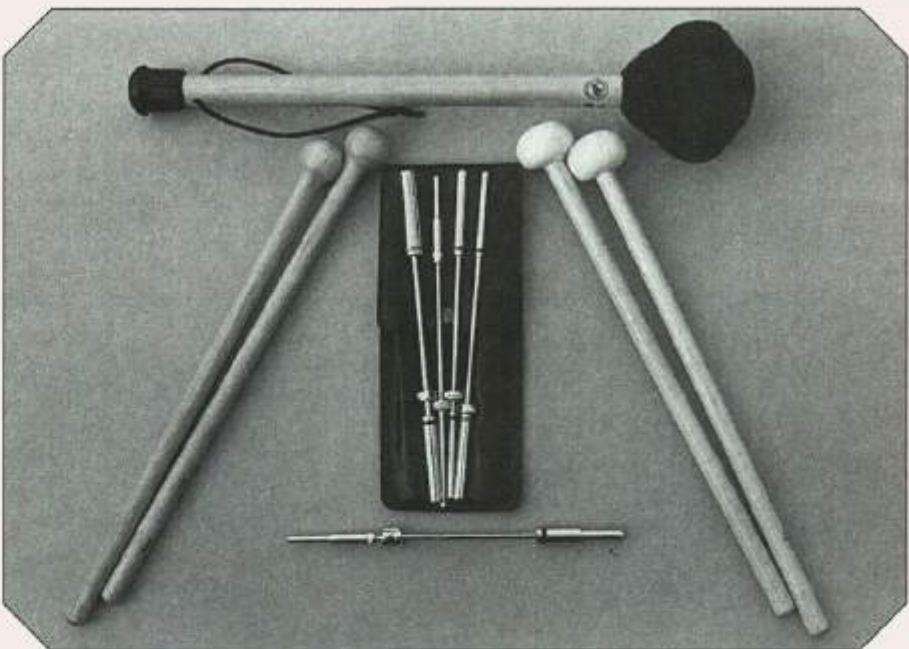
# Balter Percussion Products

■ by Rick Mattingly

Mike Balter has been turning out drumsticks, mallets, and beaters for a number of years now, and we recently received samples of several of his products. The items described below are by no means his total catalog, but they should prove of interest to percussionists.

## Triangle Beaters

A triangle is not the most responsive of instruments, in terms of dynamics. Yes, it will speak out over an entire orchestra due to its pure, high-pitched



sound. And yes, one often has to go from very soft to very loud quickly, with a single beater. But to produce the optimum dynamic control, one needs a selection of different beaters of different weights and diameters. It's not just a matter of

striking the triangle softer or harder, it's a matter of timbre, too. When struck with a heavier beater, more of the triangle vibrates, producing more overtones. The sound is not merely louder, it's also thicker.

Mike Balter produces a set of four triangle beaters that can cover the full range of dynamic needs. Each of them is double-ended, with two different-sized striking surfaces on either end. Two of the beaters are identical, with the most common-sized striking surfaces, so passages that require two beaters are no problem. The third beater has larger striking surfaces, ideal for sustained loud playing. The fourth beater has a striking surface at one end that is thinner at the tip and a little thicker further down. This beater could be used for soft to medium playing, and I also found it useful for the type of crescendo roll that is played inside the triangle with a single beater. As I got louder, I moved from the thinner part of the striking area to the thicker part. The sound became fuller as it became louder.

In addition to the set of four, Balter also produces the *4-N-1* (four in one) model. One end is the same as the one I just described: thin on the end, thicker in the middle. The other end is the same design, with proportionally thicker striking surfaces.

Balter triangle beaters also feature movable counterweights, so that you can balance the beaters however you wish. That can be a big help in controlling the softer dynamics. All of the beaters produced distinct, clear tones on the Alan Abel triangle I used to test them with. They're made of steel, so they don't pro-

duce the pronounced "click" sound that some beaters have been known to elicit.

A complete set of four Balter triangle beaters, complete with leather carrying case and a hex wrench to adjust the counterweights, lists for \$60. The *4-N-1* combination beater lists for \$22.

### Timpani Mallets

Balter timpani mallets are available in five models: *Ultra-Staccato*, *Staccato*, *General*, *Legato*, and *Wood*. The sticks themselves are made of rock maple, and are completely straight with no taper. It gives the mallets a different balance than sticks with tapers, as there is more wood up near the head. Some players feel that this type of design is top-heavy; others prefer it.

The *Wood* model is, of course, a solid piece of wood. The felt is identical on the other four models, with the size of the head determining the application: the *Ultra-Staccato* being the smallest and the *Legato* being the largest. The heads are seamless, with the felt being pulled over the top of the ball and drawn together around the shaft.

Balter's *Legato* model is similar in size and sound to a Firth *T1 General*, while the Balter *General* is closer in sound to a Goodman #3 *General*. The Balter *Staccato* wasn't a whole lot different than the *General*, but the *Ultra-Staccato* produced a hard, cutting sound.

Because Balter timpani mallets are all covered with the same material and have the same basic shape (the difference between models being the size of the head), there is a consistency that isn't always present on brands that use different materials for different models. Overall, the sticks are well-constructed, and among the five models they cover a pretty wide range. List price is \$28 per pair for the felt-covered models and \$18 for the *Wood* model.

### Gong Mallet

Balter's gong mallet features a large maple shaft and a yarn-wound head that is shaped similar to a marimba mallet. The yarn is soft enough that you can "warm-up" a large gong without hearing any impact sound, and even when you strike the gong with considerable force the impact sound is slight, leaving the gong sound itself to emerge clearly. The Balter mallet is not especially heavy, and seems best suited to small or medium-size gongs. On the largest gongs, it doesn't seem to pull out as much low-end as a heavier mallet would. But I have yet to see a single gong mallet that can cover every size of gong, so this is not a serious criticism. Balter's gong mallet is ideal for the size of instrument that will most likely be found in the typical high school, college, or community band or orchestra. The gong mallet lists for \$36.

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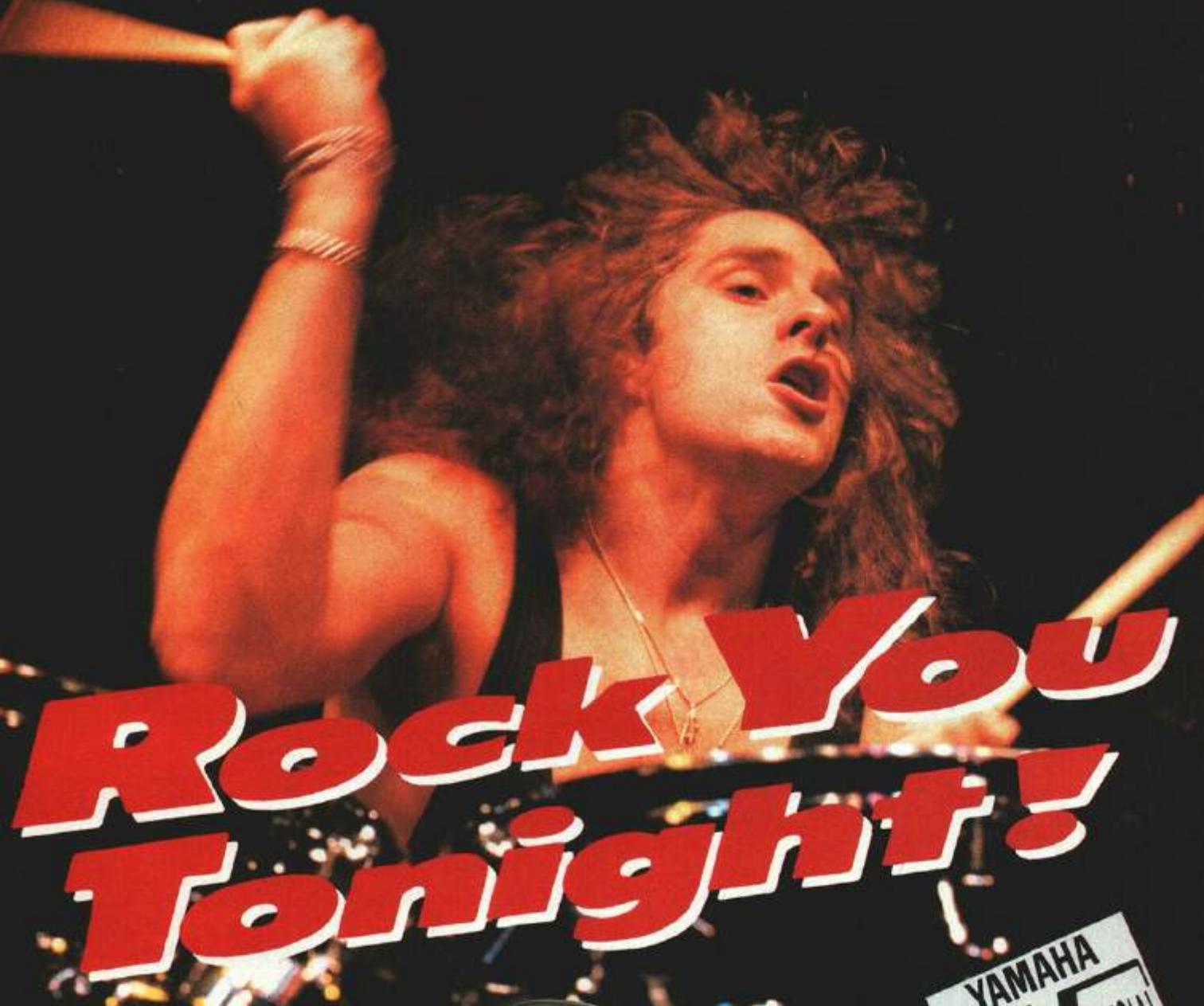
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# Roland R-70

## Human Rhythm Composer

■ by Richard Watson

### In Brief

Roland's *R-70 Human Rhythm Composer* offers a wide variety of excellent sounds, including 27 kicks, 38 snares, 31 toms, 18 cymbals and hi-hats, and a slew of Latin percussion, bass notes, and effects. Programming capabilities are equally impressive, owing to extensive (but easily understandable and performable) control parameters. Programming may be tedious (owing to the linear, step-by-step processes involved), but is by no means difficult. MIDI implementation is complete, and a Rhythm Expert function generates rhythm patterns and song "models" based upon user-designated genres and song forms as an aid to quick composition. At a suggested list price of \$799, the *R-70* is a significant addition to Roland's line of quality electronic percussion devices.

Some drummers would invite torture before surrendering to the drum machine invasion. Others consider them a necessary evil (like fiber in your diet), and use them in the studio when the producer absolutely insists, or to work out those late-night inspirations when drumkit playing would get them evicted. For members of the latter group, Roland's new *R-70 Human Rhythm Composer* is worth a serious look. Members of the former have an excellent new reason to get queasy.

### Layout And Connections

Below the 2-line, 32-character backlit LCD display, the *R-70*'s control panel pads and keys are logically grouped by function. Separate groups of keys access recording operations, storage and transfer utilities, effects and mix, mode selection, etc. Sixteen velocity-sensitive performance pads (barely big enough for two-finger playing) double as edit and function keys when used in conjunction with the shift key. Below them is a single long controller pad for varying expression parameter data. An alphanumeric pad is used to change parameter values incrementally and to name patterns and songs. Other keys select banks and groups of instruments, engage and adjust roll and flam modes, set tempo, and move the cursor. Two faders control volume and parameter values.

Back panel connections include MIDI In, Out, and Thru, stereo left and right and two individual outputs, headphone, tape sync in and out, footswitch, and a DC power jack. Also on the back panel is the display contrast control and a slot for the optional memory card.

### Internal Sounds

The *R-70* can store 210 preset 16-bit sounds drawn from Roland's *R-8* library. Thirty-two additional user-defined instruments can be customized with different tonal parameters and stored independently. The standard instruments include 27 kicks, 38 snares, 31 toms, 18 cymbals and hi-hats, 12 superb brush snares, toms, and cymbals, more Latin hand percussion than you can shake a stick at, reversed samples, acoustic and electric string basses, effects, snaps, claps, and clicks. The assortment includes plenty of large-room ambient sounds: how drums sound on the pop charts, in the stadium, and in our dreams. More impressive, though, are the close-mic' samples, which beautifully capture the subtle sonic qualities of drums up close—the way we drummers hear them. Separate ambience samples for kick, snare, and tom can be

mixed in to taste.

Even though the *R-70* lacks orchestral percussion sounds and a hi-hat heel splash (the sample that seems to have eluded the industry), I would gladly trade my *R-8M* and four RAM cards for the *R-70*'s remarkable palette. For their warmth, these are the best sounds on the market. They can be further sweetened with three kinds of reverb, two kinds of delay, chorus, and flange—all of which have controllable levels. The *R-70*'s 14-note polyphony and the variety and quality of its samples may make this the only electronic percussion sound source you need.

### MIDI Functions And Utilities

The *R-70* offers full MIDI implementation, allowing transmission and reception of program changes, control changes, and systems messages, as well as data dumps to and from other MIDI devices. Its tempo clock can be synchronized as either slave or master to external MIDI devices, and it responds to tape sync signals of a multi-track recorder.

The *R-70* memory utility displays the available storage space in internal memory and on the optional memory card. Each can store up to 100 patterns (about 3,700 notes) and 20 songs (about 2,000 parts). Prolific rhythm composers or downloaders of voluminous data from other MIDI devices will appreciate the cards as a great way to archive.

### Programming Overview

In features and flexibility, the *R-70* rivals some computer sequencing programs. A notable distinction, however, is in the area of data accessibility. The *R-70* manages relatively small data chunks in an often linear, step-by-step process. Fortunately, its mode structure employs a simple "building block" approach. Once its terminology is understood, programming may be tedious, but it won't be difficult. Basically, sound parameters and instruments are combined and arranged into patterns, which in turn are combined and arranged into songs. Let's

look at them—appropriately—one step at a time.

### Instrument Programming

The *R-70*'s smallest building block, the instrument, is composed of the basic sample and the sound parameters that affect it. Basic parameters are velocity, pitch, decay, brilliance, and note off receive. Velocity (volume produced per force of hit) hardly seems a feature of special interest, but I am impressed by the breadth of dynamic control possible with the *R-70*—particularly its capacity for ghost notes and the element of realism they provide.

Other parameters that are perhaps less familiar include the following: Layer is simply a combination of two instruments. Polyphony selection determines whether a sample is allowed to "ring" for its full duration despite reiteration, or is cut off by subsequent attack of the same instrument. Mono mode keeps distinct the attacks of certain instruments that might be otherwise obscured by successive iterations of the same sample. Sound Exclusive Group selection can assign up to eight groupings of instruments that would not normally be triggered simultaneously, such as open, closed, and pedal hi-hat, open and muted triangle, surdo or cuica, long and short guiro, etc. All instruments assigned to the same group therefore become "mutually exclusive."

Attack Damp sets a relationship between how hard a note is struck and the sharpness of its attack. This can be used, for instance, to round off the attack of soft hits on toms, thus emphasizing their resonance, and gradually increasing it to the sample's full bite on harder ones. Velocity Pitch Shift can be set to raise an instrument's pitch as the force of the hits increase. Higher values are probably best applied as a novelty, but lower shift values (on snares and particularly on toms) simulate the slight pitch modulation produced when a drumhead is played hard enough to momentarily tighten it. Nuance pro-



duces subtle variations in tone or harmonic content of many of the instruments—simulating, for example, the slight "clang" achieved by playing toward the cymbal bell or the increased low-end frequencies of a tom that's really nailed.

A separate mixer function determines each instrument's output selection or stereo pan position, as well as which of the four inboard effects are employed and to what degree. Pan, decay, and nuance can be modified while recording by playing different locations on the Positional Pad controller. These parameters' midpoints can be designated, as can a narrow, medium, or wide bandwidth of change.

Instruments are assigned to the 16 performance pads in three groups of six banks each. This yields a total of 288 (16 x 6 x 3) instrument assignment combinations. Multi mode assigns a single instrument to all 16 pads. By setting a different pitch for each, the user can play melodic sequences, bass lines, etc. Likewise, decay, nuance, and pan parameters can be altered to create more expressive performance variations.

### Pattern Programming

Patterns can be recorded by two methods: real time (playing in tempo), or step

time (without relation to tempo, one instrument at a time). With either method, different instruments can be successively "overdubbed."

Independent of existing instrument settings, the velocity, pitch, decay, nuance, and pan of any note in a sequence can be edited in real time, in step time, or globally. Timing shift and flams can also be added to individual notes on existing tracks.

Basic pattern edit operations include note erase, measure insert and delete, pattern name, copy, append and merge, and instrument change. The metronome can be programmed to play a click or any of the *R-70* instrument sounds in the usual quarter, 8th, or 16th notes or in quarter- or 8th-note triplets. Quantization resolution can be set to 12th, 16th, 32nd, or 48th notes, or to "high," which pretty much lets anything through. The quantize rate setting (sometimes called "capture ratio") is variable between a metrically perfect 10 and a humanly nonchalant 1. Similarly, Swing can be set to affect either 8th or 16th notes to a variable delay time and swing window (capture).

One of *R-70*'s niftier editing tools is called Zoom. By increasing the number of beat subdivisions, Zoom In facilitates

the insertion of smaller note values into an existing pattern. This is a welcome time saver when, for example, a couple of 32nd notes are needed in a pattern otherwise comprised of quarters, 8ths, and 16ths. Zoom Out, of course, decreases the number of subdivisions. Another handy gadget is Reframe, which shifts the start position of an existing pattern. This is used to invert a pattern within a measure (so that, for instance, count four becomes count one), or to simply offset a note by as little as 1/384 of a beat.

The "performance technique" functions, flam and roll, automatically generate their respective effects on any instrument. Roll Repeat (note frequency) values are variable, as is the space between

the grace note and main note of a flam. Feel emphasizes predetermined beats or subdivisions within a measure. Placement and degree of the accentuation is adjustable. The purpose of this feature is to endow the patterns with a less dynamically constant (and therefore more human) quality.

Programming functions that can be activated by the footswitch include start/stop, shift key, roll, flam, pad bank, pad group, and multi mode select. The tempo can also be set via the footswitch, which is useful for synchronizing an *R-70* sequence with a live performance.

Even the way in which the *R-70* responds to the user is flexible. Each parameter can be set to either increase or decrease if the keypads are pressed harder, and whether that parameter is affected subtly, moderately, or drastically.

### Song Programming

The sum of all the previous programming efforts is the Song. In addition to the rhythm patterns just discussed, an *R-70* song can contain other data elements, such as volume and tempo changes, repeats, and search marks (cues). Within the context of a song, Roland calls each rhythm pattern and each unit of song data a Part and assigns it a part number. Analogous to the basic pattern editing operations, parts can be inserted, deleted, or copied within songs. Whole songs can be named or deleted.

### Rhythm Expert

My first take on *R-70*'s Rhythm Expert function was righteous indignation: *"The day I have to consult a beat box for rhythmic ideas is the day I quit playing. This will only interest non-drummers."* But upon cooler consideration, I saw a couple of valid applications for real live drummers, too.

Rhythm Expert generates rhythm pattern and song "models" based upon user-designated genres and song forms. Eight Pattern Model variations from one to four bars in length are available for each of the seventeen genres. Patterns are divided into four types: basic, fill-in,

intro, and ending.

Song Model determines the order of song sections, such as intro, outro, verse, bridge, chorus, solos, etc., and serves as a kind of matrix into which rhythm patterns are fitted. At the user's discretion, stylistically appropriate fills can be added automatically to highlight phrase endings.

The factory patterns, songs, and fills created by Rhythm Expert range from really cool to really cheesy. Most sound pretty mechanical, but they can be humanized and otherwise tailored to the user's particular needs. For all these reasons, Rhythm Expert should be viewed more as a means of streamlining the programming process than as an end in itself; it will usually be faster to copy, modify, and embellish a Rhythm Expert beat than to create one using either recording method, especially step time. As a practice or compositional tool, it provides a shortcut to drafting song structures whose form, feel, and even genre can be quickly modified. These models can be converted into user patterns and songs and stored like those created from scratch. However helpful this feature may be, it's with no small relief I report that even the *R-70* offers no viable substitute for a drummer's creativity.

### Conclusions

Roland has squeezed a mountain of flexible functionality into this compact package. The curse of this is, with all the places it can take you, your fingers may do a lot of walking. But thanks to a straightforward and readable manual and to Roland's engineers (who obviously haven't lost touch with non-engineer musicians), all that power is easy to use. Together with its array of top-notch samples, the *R-70*'s flexible quantization and allowance of temporal and timbral performance subtleties facilitate frighteningly "human" drum parts. The unit lists for \$799. For more information contact Roland Corp US, 7200 Dominion Circle, Los Angeles, CA 90040-3647, (213) 685-5141.



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## Meinl Timbales



Meinl's new 13" and 14" timbale set features their "free floating" hardware system, which doesn't require drill holes through the shells for hardware. The set also features specially made Evans heads, as well as a solid, tilting stand with a "touch lock system," plus an adjustable cow-bell holder and a pair of timbale sticks. **Roland Meinl Musikinstrumente, Postfach 15 49, An den Herrenbergen**

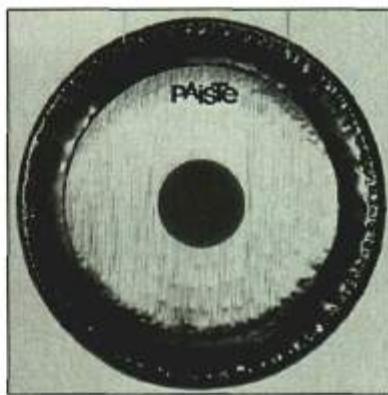
24, W-8530 Neustadt a.d. Aisch, Germany, tel: (09161) 78 80, fax: (09161) 30 06 and 58 02.

## Cannon Radical Drumset

Cannon's new *Radical V* drumset features power-depth toms, bass, and snare drums, double-braced hardware, and a "tone coating" sprayed inside all drums, at, according to the makers, a lower cost than other manufacturers' comparable kits. **Universal Percussion, 2773 E. Midlothian Blvd., Struthers, OH 44471.**

## Paiste Planet Gongs

Paiste has a new—or old, depending on how you look at it—take on sound design. Their new *Planet Gongs* "are tuned in conformity with the natural harmonic series of the earth, the moon, the sun, and planets according to German Gnostic Hans Cousto." Paiste claims such theories account for the gongs' "mysterious" sounds. **Paiste America, Inc., 460 Atlas St., Brea, CA 92621, tel: (714) 529-2222, (800) 472-4783, fax: (714) 671-5869.**



## Cappella Practice Pads

Cappella's *Rite Touch* practice pads feature a ten-sided design and are available in 6" and 12" sizes. *Rite Touch* pads employ two

playing surfaces: one of 100% gum rubber, the other a harder, neoprene surface. According to the makers, the gum rubber side is ideal for developing stick control and coordination, the neoprene surface for gaining strength; each side gives a distinctive sound. The 12" pad fits easily on snare stands, and the 6" pad attaches to most cymbal stands. **Cappella, P.O. Box 2467, Applegarth Road, Hightstown, NJ 08520, tel: (609) 448-1153 and (800) 262-BEAT, fax: (609) 443-1464.**

## Danmar Aldridge Bass Drum Beater

Danmar's *Tommy Aldridge* model kick drum beater features a specially shaped hardwood beater that the company says provides more impact and throws farther. The beater is also "perfectly balanced" and light in weight for increased speed. Three models are available: The 207 is a regular length, the 207A is longer and larger for larger drums, and the 207B has a bent shaft for double bass pedals. **Danmar Percussion Products, 7618 Woodman Ave., Van Nuys, CA 91402, tel: (818) 787-3444, fax: (818) 786-7358.**

## Rhythm Tech Hi-Hat Tambourine

According to Rhythm Tech, their new *Hat Trick* hi-hat tambourine allows intricate tambourine patterns to be played without altering the feel of hi-hat pedals. Rhythm Tech also states that mounting the *Hat Trick* either up-side-down or right-side-up results in two distinct sounds. The *Hat Trick* features a steel frame with a black powder-coat finish for extra road-worthiness, plus a low-profile mount and wing screw. **Rhythm Tech, Inc., 511 Center Ave., Mamaroneck, NY 10543.**

## New Westone Earplugs

Westone Laboratories has introduced their new *ER-25* earplugs, which have 10 dB more attenuation than the company's *ER-15* model. Westone claims that the plugs provide protection without resulting in a muffled sound. The company suggests the use of the *ER-25* over the *ER-15* in situations where sound levels regularly exceed 105 dB. *ER-15* owners can purchase *ER-25* attenuator buttons for added protection without having to get new ear molds. **Westone Laboratories, Inc., P.O. Box 15100, Colorado Springs, CO 80935, (800) 525-5071.**

## Sonor Wearables

Sonor's new clothing line, Sonor Wearables, includes short- and long-sleeve T-shirts, a mock turtleneck, a sweatshirt, sweatpants, a cap, a tour jacket, and a limited-edition varsity jacket that features a black wool body and leather-look sleeves and collar. Also available are a set of five luggage LD. tags (for use on drum cases) and terry headbands and wristbands. Sonor, c/o HSS, Inc., P.O. Box 9167, Richmond, VA 23227.

## PureCussion Muff'its Improved

PureCussion's *Muffit* drum head muffling strips are now die-cut and feature a serrated edge, allowing the material to bend and better follow the circumference of heads, according to the makers. *Muffits* are available in separate packets for toms and bass drums. **PureCussion, Inc., 3611 Wooddale Ave., S., Minneapolis, MN 55416, (612) 927-2330**

## New From Yamaha



Yamaha says that their new *RM50* single-rack-space rhythm sound module features 1,100 voices and 128 rhythm kits, as well as full data expandability from other sources. It also features a 16-bit, second-generation advanced wave memory system, enhanced by a selection of waveforms that can be processed with programmable digital filters. Three wave card slots allow for the use of the additional waveforms and voices available on the optional wave cards released for Yamaha's *RY30*, *SY77*, and *SY55* units. **Yamaha Corp of America, Digital Musical Instruments, P.O. Box 6600, Buena Park, CA 90622.**

Also new from Yamaha are their *SCH1* suspended cymbal holder and line of professional symphonic triangles. The *SCH1* fits any cymbal stands with a 7/8" opening, accommodates cymbals up to 22", and comes with a removable padded stick tray that can be purchased separately or with Yamaha's *MS925* base. The company's new triangles are made from a treated metal and SK steel, and are available in 4", 6", 8", and 10" sizes.

**Yamaha Corp of America, Band & Orchestral Division, 3445 East Paris Ave., S.E., P.O. Box 899, Grand Rapids, MI 49512-0899.**

## Quik Lok Tripod Boom Mic'

Quik Lok's *A-300 Microlite Tripod* boom microphone stand employs light-weight steel tubing (total weight is four and a half pounds), can be raised to a height of 60", and features rubber gaskets to lessen vibration and increase stability. No-strip metal inserts with nylon bushings are designed to prevent scratching of the stand's black satin finish. The stand's bottom is flanged to keep the tube from separating from the base, which employs no internal pins that can break, according to the makers. In addition, the impact-resistant, lightweight polycarbonate base bounces back when a leg is stepped on, which lessens the possibility of their bending or snapping. **Music Industries Corp., 99 Tulip Ave., Floral Park, NY 11001, tel: (516) 352-4110 and (800) 431-6699, fax: (516) 352-0754.**

## HQ RealFeel Practice Manual

The *HQ RealFeel Practice Manual* is a 12-page booklet that includes practice pad exercises by Kenny Aronoff, Johnny Lane, Gary Chaffee, Dom Famularo, Chuck Silverman, Ed Soph, Gordy Knudtson, Rick Latham, and Ed Soph. **HQ Percussion Products, PO. Box 430065, St. Louis, MO 63143, (314) 647-9009.**

## Hands On Gripping Powder

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## Updated Remo Falams K Heads

Remo's "second generation" *Falams K* drumheads feature *Kevlar*, *Mylar*, and a new steel ring technology that Remo states increases the heads' durability and performance. *Falams K* batter heads are available in 14" and 15" sizes, in Coated, Smooth White, Ebony, and Natural super weight film, and with or without Clear Dot reinforcement. Snare-side heads are available in Smooth White. **Remo, Inc., 12804 Raymer St., No. Hollywood, CA 91605, (818) 983-2600.**



## New Trigger Perfect System

Trigger Perfect's *DSH-10* trigger system employs a conventional head contact trigger plus a shell-mounted trigger. The company states that this design vastly increases consistency and reliability, with the head-mount trigger offering sensitivity and the shell-mount serving as a permanent back-up. The head-mount trigger is detachable and replaceable for high-use situations. **Trigger Perfect, P.O. Box 60065, Pasadena, CA 91116, tel: (800) 487-9927, fax: (818) 792-4798.**



# The Funky Octopus Beat

■ by Tommy Campbell



I'd like to share with you a challenging little pattern that I recently came up with. My goal when I started working on up with a beat that many different sound as possible, and that o lead with both my s. I also wanted a pat-  
tical, as well as one  
xercise to strengthen  
The result was the  
(Don't worry, eight  
red to play it!)

The beat is a four-bar phrase, with the first two bars moving one way on the kit and the second two bars moving in the opposite direction. You'll understand what I mean when you check out the sticking pattern. Besides leading with both hands, the beat incorporates what I call "broken" double strokes:

The first note of a double is played on one sound source, the second note on another.

I use a fairly large kit, and this beat becomes downright nasty the more sounds you try to incorporate. However, it works just fine played on a smaller drumset. Example 1 is written for a kit with just one tom (in a repeated two-bar phrase). No matter what size kit you have, work on this one first. Example 2 is the full Octopus, adding a lot of different sound sources (and a slight sticking change) to the pattern. The beauty of this pattern is that it can be applied to whatever type of kit you have.

A few more suggestions: I'd begin working on this beat by practicing the sticking alone on a pad or a single drum, before sitting down at the kit. Once you're comfortable with that, it's easier to adapt it to the set. When you start working on it at the drums, just play the hand parts without your feet. Add your

feet only after your hand motion is under control. One other thing to keep in mind: This is supposed to be funky, so play the accented bass and snare notes hard, and make it groove.

As you play through the patterns you may find that you have difficulty playing certain notes on the hi-hat because of the cross-overs that occur. If, because of your setup, this is a problem, try substituting a right hand/hi-hat note with a right on a cymbal bell on the right side of your kit. (I have two rides—on the left and right—and I occasionally substitute all of the written closed hi-hat notes with bell hits.) Feel free to experiment.

I have found this beat to be very helpful in increasing my overall strength and my ability to get around the kit in a slightly different way. I enjoy putting on some funk music and playing this beat along with it for long periods of time. It's a good workout. Have fun with it!

*Tommy Campbell has toured and recorded with John McLaughlin, Sonny Rollins, and Dizzy Gillespie, among others. He is currently working with the Manhattan Transfer.*

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# Slingerland Radio Kings: Part 1

■ by John M. Aldridge

The popularity of Slingerland *Radio King* drums has skyrocketed in the past few years, and the reason for this is easy to define: *Radio King* shells and lugs seem to produce a unique sound that separates them from other vintage drums.

The snare drums are probably the main reason for their current popularity. The single-ply maple shells that make the *Radio King* snare unique are so in-demand that several modern drum manufacturers are now producing solid wood shells.

Because of the rediscovery and newfound popularity of *Radio Kings*, many people are curious as to how to determine the age of a specific model. While it is impossible to guarantee accuracy when determining the age of a *Radio King*, the lug design, hoops, strainers, and badge are fairly good indicators of the date of manufacture.

When the *Radio King* line was first produced around 1936, its most significant design feature was the lug design. Like most other American drum manufacturers, Slingerland had previously used tube lugs or single-tension rods and claws on all their drums. The new cigar-shaped *Radio King* lugs were called *Streamlined*. Their one-piece design was used on the snare drums first, and on bass drums and toms the following year.

The *Streamlined* lug design was the first offered by Slingerland that provided swivel nuts to prevent cross-threading of the lugs. This design was continued through most of the lifetime of the *Radio King* line, and is the most common lug found on bass drums. When it was used on snare drums and small toms, it had two holes—one on each end—providing separate tension for both heads. When the lug was mounted on a floor tom, bass drum, or large mounted tom, separate casings were used for each head, with only one end of the casing open. The *Streamlined* lug was even used on tom-toms in conjunction with a tacked-on bottom head.

When the *Radio King* first appeared, single-flanged straight hoops with collar hooks were still in use. The first snare drums to be released with these engraved *Radio King* straight hoops had a solid maple shell and 10 tube lugs.

Today the drums are very rare. It seems that at the same time that the *Radio King* name was introduced, Slingerland was also introducing their new cast lug casings. The cast lugs quickly replaced tube lugs on the *Radio King* line, and tube lugs were relegated to the lower-priced lines. However, in the


*Slingerland*

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**THE BEN POLLACK MODEL "RADIO KING"**

*Equipped with Internal Tone Control and Self-Aligning Lugs*

The "Dean of Swing," Ben Pollack, designed this new model. This new Radio King incorporates all of Pollack's original specifications plus his new ideas. The new feature of this drum is that the wood hoops are countersunk at the side of the hoop, making it ideal for rim-shots and brush work, for which Ben Pollack is famous.

Nickel      Chromium

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This page from the 1938 Slingerland catalog indicates that both metal and wooden hoops were popular at that time. Note the unusual countersunk hoop claws on the *Ben Pollack* model.

1936 Slingerland catalog, the snare drums were the only models pictured with the new lug casing.

Double-flanged hoops, which eliminated the need for collar hooks, also appeared in the '36 catalog. The Slingerland *Radio King* logo was either engraved or stamped into these brass hoops, and is a good way of differentiating between the *Radio King* and other Slingerland drums.

In 1936, the first drumsets offered with the *Radio King* snare drum came with either a 12x26 or 14x28 bass drum with tube lugs, and a Chinese tom-tom with heads tacked on the top and

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bottom. It was not until the following year that *Radio King* tom-toms, floor toms, and bass drums were offered.

The 1937 catalog description points out the newest development in tom-toms: "Unlike anything ever heard before, unlike any tom-tom now in use, these new models represent the ultimate in tone, carrying power, and appearance...they give the drummer the true 'jungle bottom.'"

A large variety of tom sizes were offered—all of which were manufactured with 3-ply mahogany shells. The 1937 catalog shows 5 x 8, 6 1/2 x 10, 8 x 12, and 9 x 13 mounted toms, as well as 12 x 14 and 16 x 16 floor toms. Bass drums were offered in two sizes: The *Epic* set offered a 12 x 26, while the rest of the sets show 14 x 28 bass drums. The floor toms did not have legs, but floor stands were offered to hold them. The mounted toms and floor toms alike were offered with either key tension rods or timpani handles. As far as cosmetics, Slingerland offered a choice of pearl or duco (dual color, painted sunburst) finishes in different colors, and either chromium or nickel-plated lugs and hardware.

The muffler offered on these drums (as well as on the snare

by Leedy, Ludwig, and several other companies at the time. The test of time has shown this to be the most durable strainer available on a *Radio King*.

In addition to the throw-off, there were "bridges" on either side of the drum that allowed the use of extended-length snares. On early *Radio Kings*, these bridges were attached to the shell with four bolts. By 1940, an additional two bolts were added to ensure the stability of the bridges. The 1941 catalog shows both 4-hole and 6-hole bridges, which is probably due to the reuse of photographs from previous catalogs.

Slingerland, like Ludwig, used the names of popular endorsing artists to denote the different sizes and models of the *Radio King*. In 1941, the *Buddy Rich Swingster* was the only *Radio King* snare offered without the bridges. It also featured separate top and bottom lug casings, and came in 7" or 8" shell depths. The *Gene Krupa* model was only offered with a 6 1/2"-deep shell, eight double-ended *Streamlined* casings, the *Rapid* strainer, and snare bridges. The 1936 *Bernie Mattison* model had the same features as the *Krupa* model, but was only offered in an 8" depth. The *Band Master* model—also offered in 1936—featured the same type of lugs as the *Krupa* model, but was only offered in 6 1/2" and 8" depths with a 15"-diameter shell. This drum also featured wood hoops on the top and bottom. The *Hollywood Ace*, featuring 7" or 8" depths, *Rapid* strainer, and snare bridges, was dedicated to Maurice Purcell.

The most unusual early *Radio King* was the 1941 *Ray McKinley* model. The top hoop was wood with the claw hooks "countersunk" into the side of the hoop to keep the top of the rim smooth. Like the *Krupa* model, the *McKinley* utilized double-ended casings, the *Rapid* strainer, and snare bridges. The bottom

hoop was metal, as on the other models. There was also a metal-shell *Radio King* offered in the 1936 catalog. It was only available in a 6 1/2 x 14 size.

The badge on the early *Radio King* drums was the scalloped or "cloud" badge. This badge wasn't put on floor toms or mounted toms, though. Instead, the *Radio King* logo was engraved or stamped into the metal hoops. The earliest *Radio King* tom-tom rims were single-flanged straight hoops with collar hooks used for tensioning. As with the snare drums, double-flanged hoops replaced these single-flanged hoops late in 1936, but many sets exist with the single-flanged, engraved hoops.

So much for the early, seminal years of *Radio King* history. Next month, we'll pursue the development of the line through the war years and into the 1970s.



This 1928 7x14 *Artist* model featured a straightforward design: ten tube lugs, a simple strainer, and tension rods that gripped the top of the hoop with small claws.



The 1938 *Gene Krupa* model employed a much more sophisticated design, including eight *Streamlined* lugs, an adjustable snare bridge, and contoured hoops with eyeholes for the tension rods.

and parade drums) was the *Harold R. Todd* Internal Tone Control. This muffler used a pivoting framework inside the shell with two felt discs attached to the frame. A thumbnut on the outside of the shell controlled the pressure on the head. The *Todd* muffler was a permanent fixture on *Radio Kings* through the late 1950s.

*Radio King* snare drums were initially offered with 5x14, 6 1/2 x 14, 7 x 14, 8 x 14, 6 1/2 x 15, and 8x15 wood shells. To begin with, only one snare throw-off was offered, the "professional rapid throw-off muffler strainer." This strainer, like those of most of the other major manufacturers', had a small extension lever attached to the throw-off arm with a thumbscrew. It was mounted to the shell with three screws and stood out from the shell on three legs. The butt side of the strainer, a skeletal clamp attached with two bolts, was identical to the butts used



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# Jimmy DeGrasso

## Hard Rock Journeyman

■ by Robyn Flans

Everyone should have a year like Jimmy DeGrasso's 1991. His goal was to play with a variety of people, and he definitely attained it! At the end of '90, during his last tour with Y&T, DeGrasso was flying in and out of LA. for pre-production on Fiona's *Squeeze*, which commenced in the spring of '91. Upon the completion of *Squeeze*, Jimmy had a month off before he was offered a summer tour with White Lion. Following that tour, he was home for a day when a call came asking him to perform on camera with Alice Cooper in the movie *Wayne's World*. He then came to LA. for two days, returned home to San Jose, and a day later got the call to work with Lita Ford. While he was rehearsing with Lita, he was doing photo shoots with Fiona, and while he was touring with Ford, Y&T called to get back together for some year-end shows. Whew!

When Jimmy is asked what his most challenging situation has been, his answer isn't music. Instead, he laughs, "It's trying to balance my schedule to keep everyone happy. The hardest thing hasn't been the playing, but knowing what decisions to make. Sometimes those decisions come down to 'Do I follow my heart or do I fill my wallet?'

"I believe everything happens for a reason," DeGrasso philosophizes. "I got an offer for a particular gig a couple of years ago. I really wasn't happy in Y&T at the time, and the offer was for a substantial amount of money and a really good tour. But I said no. Soon after, I thought, 'Oh man, what did I do?' But the reason I didn't do it was because I didn't want people to think I jumped ship. Sooner or later you have to be committed to something, regardless of the pitfalls. It would have been fun to play with other people, but then I wouldn't have made that last live Y&T album, which I'm really proud of. So it all worked out



Photo by Lisa Wales

in the long run."

It seems to have all worked out for DeGrasso from the beginning. Jimmy drove to LA. from Pennsylvania with two friends at the age of 20 and managed to be working with Ozzy Osbourne six months later. Jimmy recalls thinking, "'Who is always replacing musicians?' At the time, Ozzy Osbourne was really hot. I thought, 'Tommy Aldridge is not going to be there forever.' I was here for about six months—hanging out with people and doing a lot of demos for very little money. I was absolutely, positively broke—I think I had a quarter—when I ran into a friend of mine in the apartment complex I was living in. He said, 'Did you know Ozzy is down the street looking for a drummer?' It was late Sunday night, and at 8:00 Monday morning I called Ozzy's hotel room and said, 'Hey man, I'm your guy.' He said, 'Yeah, yeah, come on down.'

"So I went down, and there were like eight hundred other drummers there," Jimmy recalls. "I got there at 2:00 in the afternoon and didn't get to play until 8:00 at night. Ozzy had already left, he was so sick of it. There were just a guitar player and a bass player. It was brutal. Guys would go in, play for fifteen seconds, and then it was, 'Stop. Out.' If a guy went in and his time sucked, it was real evident. Or if he was nervous and

To see me  
play with  
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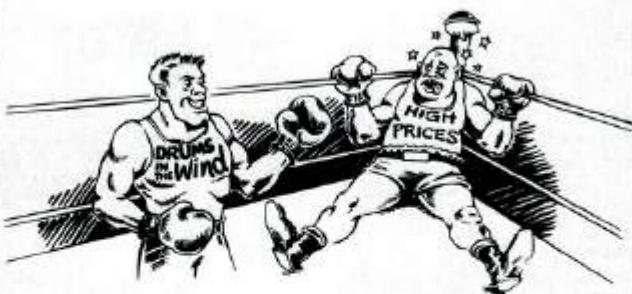
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choked, they could tell. I think they were nice about it, but....

"By the time I went in, the two guys weren't talking to anyone," Jimmy continues. "They were just sitting there, pointing to the drumset. We played a song, and then they walked to the corner of the room, sat down, and talked. I thought, 'I guess I'm out of here,' so I started packing my cymbals. But they said, 'Hey, you wanna hang out for a while?' So I hung out and played and they said, 'Why don't you come back tomorrow and we'll play some more.' It was really cool. They had me come back a couple of times, and finally they called me to go over to England. I was there for a couple of months, and we did a bunch of 36-track demos. We went through the whole songwriting and recording process. To a young guy from a small town, it was a great education in dealing with people and the business."

While very exciting, working with Osbourne was not particularly easy, due to Ozzy's much publicized alcohol and drug problems. "You just never knew what to expect, both musically and personally," Jimmy recalls. "I'd play something one day and he'd say, 'That was great,' and the next day it was, 'What the hell are you playing?' But that's all part of it, and I have nothing but fond memories. In the meantime, he was firing the band one by one. When I left London, it was only me and the guitar player. They said, 'Why don't you go home for a while; we don't know what the hell we're doing.' When they didn't call a couple of months later, I figured, 'Well, that's it.' The next thing I heard, there was a whole new band."

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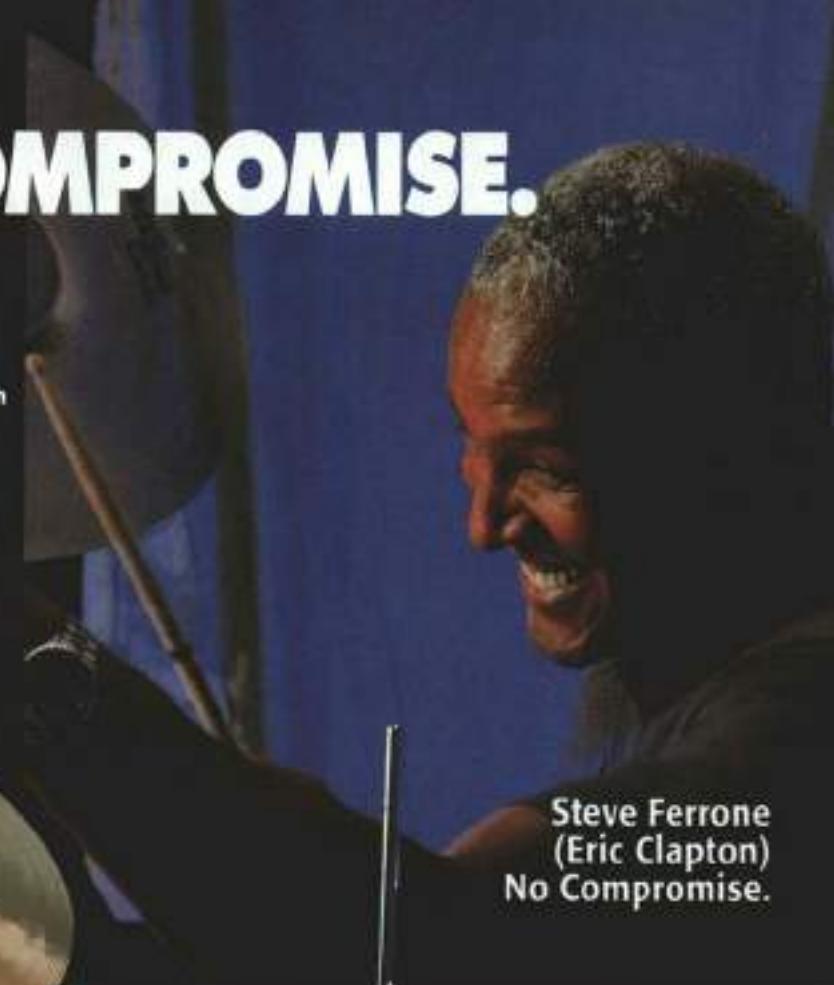
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**Steve Ferrone  
(Eric Clapton)  
No Compromise.**

But when the *Ultimate Sin* album came out, much to Jimmy's surprise it contained a thanks to him, and the drum parts were exactly as he had created them for the demos. "And even though it didn't work out with Ozzy, I got other gigs through that experience. The producer who did the tape recommended me for an Irish power trio called Mama's Boys. It was short-lived, but from that, other things came. Then the tour manager recommended me for yet another gig. So even though the Ozzy gig didn't work out and at the time it was really devastating, the calls have come ever since."

After London, Jimmy returned to Pennsylvania with about \$200—he had just never thought to ask Osbourne about money. But he also had a great demo tape. When an LA friend called DeGrasso to tell him Y&T was looking for a drummer, he sent that tape, and they flew him to the audition.

"I was playing in upstate New York on a Friday night," says Jimmy. "We finished about 3:00 or 4:00 in the morning, and my drum roadie drove me right to Newark Airport, which was an hour drive. I hadn't been to bed. I flew from Newark to Oakland and learned the six songs on the plane. I got off the plane carrying my cymbal bag and my stick bag—and I think I had some clothes in the cymbal bag. There were a lot of guys auditioning from LA who brought their drums up, but I had had to call S.I.R. in San Francisco and say, 'Here's my credit card number; have a kit there.' I got to the audition, walked in, and said two words: 'Let's play.' I was just too tired to talk. Ten days later we played an arena show in front of 8,000 people.

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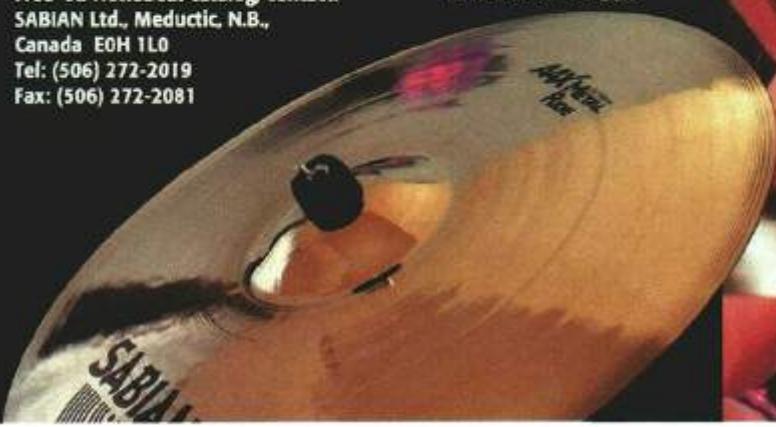
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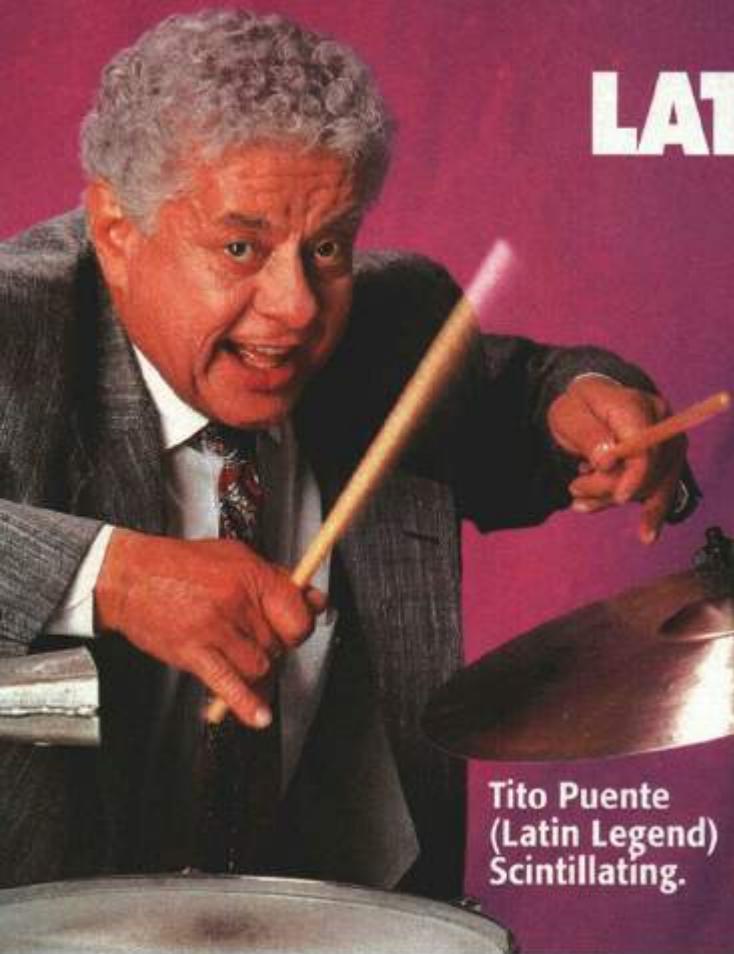
Then we wrote an album in two months.

"The only experience I had had with being in a band and writing songs was the Ozzy situation," Jimmy continues, "which is why that experience was so invaluable. With Y&T it was weird for a while, because they hired me after meeting me for only two or three hours. Not only were we getting to know each other as people, we were writing songs together, which is a real personal thing. It wasn't, 'Here are some demos, play the same drum parts.' It was, 'We've got a couple of licks here and there and we have to do an album in two months, so anything you could throw in would be appreciated.' A lot of people don't want you that involved; they want to write and they want the publishing, and they want you to just sit there and play your drums. We rehearsed during the day, and at night I'd go home with a guitar and see what I could come up with. We did that six days a week for two months, then did the *Contagious* record, which came out in the summer of '87."

For the first year, Y&T was the gig DeGrasso had dreamed of—a band that wrote and recorded albums, toured, and made videos. But after touring in late '87 and '88, the momentum slowed down. "The downfall of the band was that we wrote songs for so long—almost two years—that we lost our buzz. We worked so long on that record that when it came out and didn't go through the roof, that was it. Everyone was really disheartened, which happens to a lot of bands. I wanted to go out and do other things, and so did the others."

When Jimmy joined Fiona, one of the things he enjoyed was

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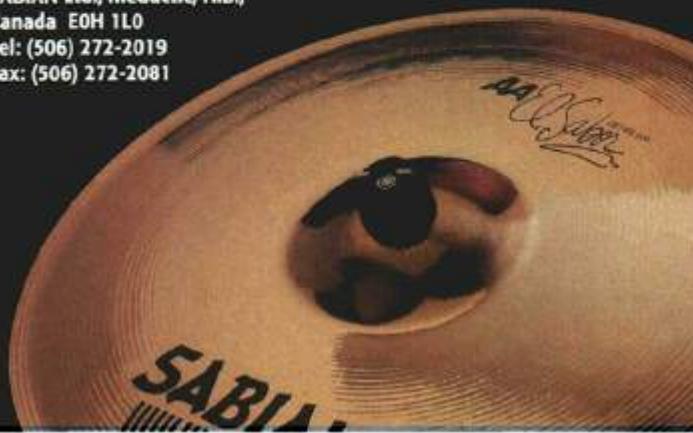
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being able to play in different styles. The tune "Mystery Of Love," a lush ballad with a live orchestra, was a thrill in particular because it was different from anything he had ever done. "You want to feel you can play anything," he says. "I'd love to play with someone like Harry Connick next. I played with a big band when I was 18, and it was a lot of fun—although you can't make a dime at it. To see me play with White Lion or Fiona, you wouldn't think I could play timpani or keep a big band together."

While he does play in a fusion band called the Stand when he has time off at home in the Bay Area, DeGrasso's calls have been primarily for rock situations. "When people are looking for a rock drummer," Jimmy explains, "they're looking for a solid hitter with good time who can really drive a band. I've played in a lot of different bands with a lot of different musicians, and you have to be able to drive the whole thing. You have to make it cook and make it groove. It's something where you just go in and play. It's funny—at all these auditions, I'd see a lot of the same guys. They'd learn the songs off the records, come in with their *Dr. Rhythms*, and dial in their tempos. Hey, just go in and play the song! You can go to school for fifty years, practice the rudiments, and play in 5 and 7 all over the place. But when it's all said and done, you have to make the band happen."

"In all my gigs, I've pretty much done the same thing; I really haven't altered that much. With Y&T, I could do whatever I wanted, because two of the guys were really into other things

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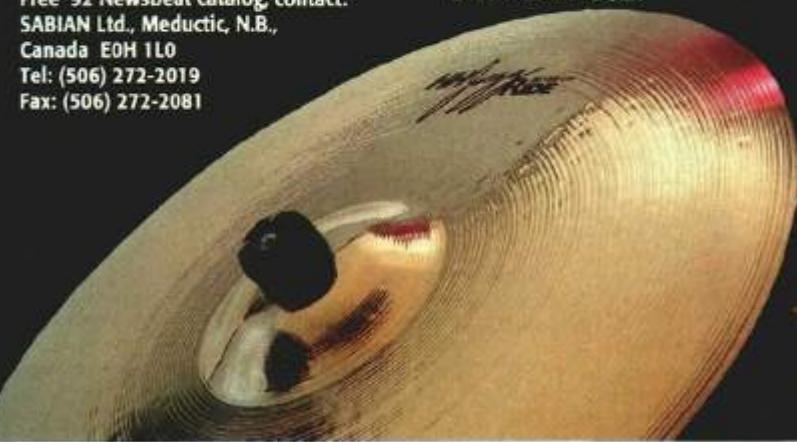
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besides rock. If I started turning the beat around, it was, 'Yeah, cool.' In some gigs, if you do that, it's, 'You're not in the band anymore.' The White Lion gig was the same way; I could just go for it.

"Lita's songs were more precise," DeGrasso continues. "Her new album has a lot of background vocals, and there was no way four sweating guys could do four-part harmonies like that. So we had the idea to pull the background vocals and the click off the masters—and I played along with them. Myron Grombacher did the record, and his click patterns were really fun. He programmed all these Latin-type beats, so I was back there just laughing and playing to this cool stuff on about four or five songs."

For Fiona, DeGrasso employs a slightly simpler approach. "With this band, I'm playing for the songs," he says. "There were a couple of songs on the record, like 'Squeeze,' where I could play anything I wanted. But she has a lot of mid-tempo songs and a couple of ballads, and those songs are based more on their dominant melody and lyrical content. So the situation dictates playing a little bit less. My favorite drummers—like Mickey Curry and Bun E. Carlos—play less. I love those Cheap Trick records. Bun E. doesn't play a lot, but when he does, it's what it's supposed to be and that's it. It seems to me that as you get older, you play less. That's a strange thing to say, but

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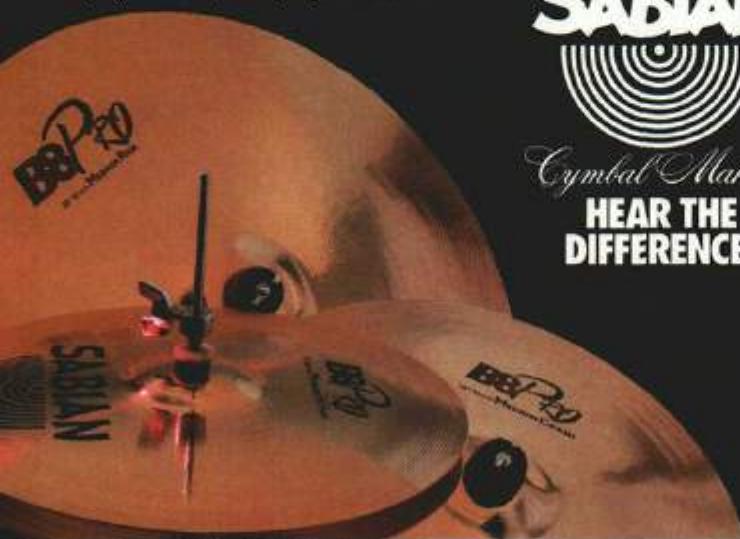
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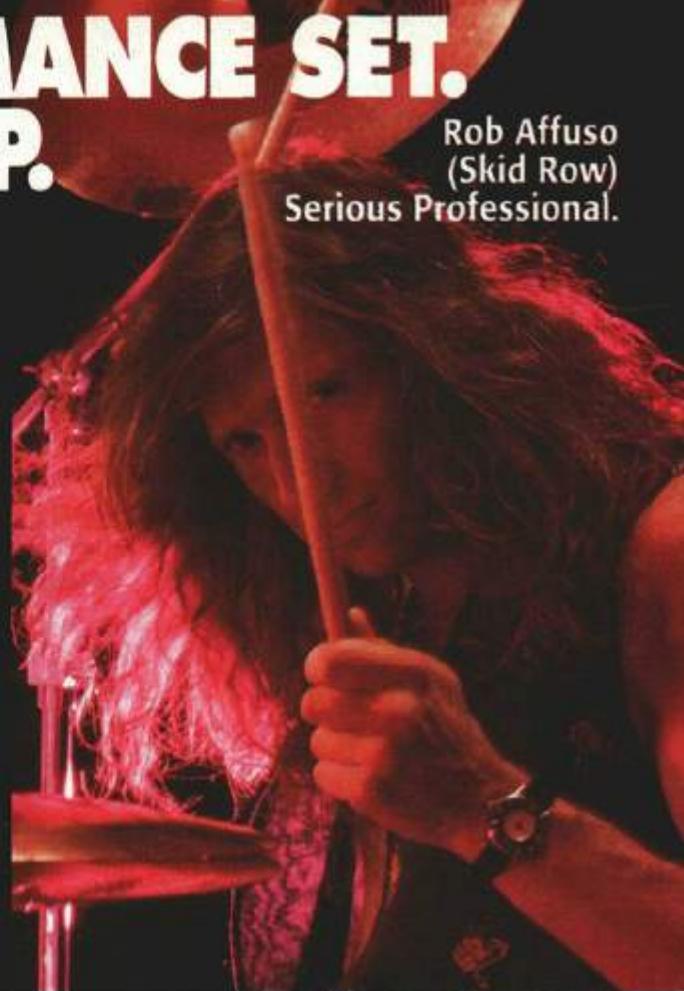
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there's a certain musical maturation and taste that comes with age. I remember ten years ago reading somebody saying, 'I play a lot less than I used to when I was younger,' and I went, 'Yeah, you wimp!' But it's true. You play less, and when you do play something, you really make it count."

Even as he discusses maturity, Jimmy is still attuned to the younger mentality. He teaches during whatever time off he has, and remembers how *he* didn't want to be taking lessons or practicing when he was young. But looking back, Jimmy credits all those lessons—and all his club playing—for preparing him to do what he does today. "I played six nights a week, three sets a night," he says. "It's an amazing education to play like that, although you don't realize it at the time because you're just having fun."

"You learn about life real quick," Jimmy says, "due to all the different personalities you deal with and all the problems you encounter. You learn about coping other people's styles, because you're playing Top-40. You learn a lot about traveling, and you learn about your time, endurance, stamina, showmanship, and professionalism—if you really dig into it. Some people just glaze through it, but I always took it very seriously. I figure that if you do something, you should do it to the best of your ability."



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## IT'S QUESTIONABLE

continued from page 16

some Zildjian cymbal cleaner. I recommend cleaning the cymbal approximately every three to four months."

### When Should You Change Bottom Heads?

My question is: How do you know when it's time to change the front head on a bass drum and the bottom heads on toms? Also, do you know of any books available on the subject of tuning drums?

John Spaine  
Dixon IL

**A** The front bass drum head and bottom tom heads are primarily responsible for giving your drums their resonance and projection. To do this, they must be able to maintain their proper tension. Obviously, these heads won't

wear out as quickly as will batter heads, but over a period of time they can start to lose the ability to hold their tension properly. The most likely thing that you'll notice is that your drums begin to sound a little "dead" or "dull," and no amount of tuning either the top or bottom heads seems to correct the problem. Assuming that your batter heads are new (or at least in good shape), you should suspect your bottom heads. If you have to tighten them up past their optimum pitch in order to get a good, resonant tension level, it's time to replace the heads.

An excellent book on the subject of tuning drums is *Drum Tuning*, by Larry Nolly. At the time it was reviewed in the August '89 issue of *MD*, it was published by Drumstix Publishing, P.O. Box 9216, Wilmington, DE 19809-9216.

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# Composers And Samplers

■ by Emil Richards

In most articles that I write—and in most master classes and clinics that I give—I stress the importance of being *very* prepared for any musical possibility that a composer may write for us. It seems that last year the parts became more and more challenging. My personal feeling is, with the introduction of more electronic music, composers seem to hear phrases of music as if they were being done on sequencers, and they tend to write that way. Of course the caliber of musicianship also keeps improving, so composers feel they can write just about anything they hear, knowing that there are people out there who can play the music!

On the *Star Trek VI* session I played the mallet chair, and Ken Watson played the timpani chair. (See the part.) Note that the timpani part looks as though it were a marimba part. The marimba does join in toward the end of the cue, but the timpanist has his work cut out for him on this one! Try this at about quarter note = 120. (If I remember correctly, it was even a little faster than that.)

Speaking of electronics, there are certainly great musicians who are using electronic instruments and doing marvelous things musically with them. I also occasionally use some elec-

tronic gear, though I have tried to stay as "organic" a player as possible—especially since I have 650 different ethnic percussion instruments in my collection.

And though I am happy to swap some of my sounds with my fellow percussionists, when keyboard players or composers ask if they can sample my instruments, I have to respectfully decline. My feeling is, if we give all of our "sounds" to the composers—who are now performing entire scores on their own—the need for the percussionist in today's music diminishes considerably.

In fact, because of this situation I no longer work for one of the leading composers in LA (I won't name names.) I worked for this particular composer for the last eight or ten years, but since I declined him the use of my sounds, I have not worked with him. I have prided myself on collecting and learning to play all of these wonderful percussion instruments, and I felt it was an imposition and in bad taste to be asked to "give away" my sounds and livelihood. My feeling is, drummers and percussionists *unite!* Let us play our own instruments and let others use our talents, not only our sounds.

**PERCUSSION** 

Medium Sust. Clm.  
Timb.  
Chimes  
Patti  
Xylophone  
Marimba  
Electronic  
Sust. Clm.

**STAR TREK VI** 32301

**1 M 1**

Music score for Star Trek VI, page 1 M 1. The score includes parts for Medium Sust. Clm., Timb., Chimes, Patti, Xylophone, Marimba, and Electronic Sust. Clm. The score consists of six staves of musical notation.

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Reel A 48

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1.00

Xylophone

16th notes, Cresc.

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I like that I can just take it on and off without a drum key!" Gregg's comments on the new LP forged-steel clamp design were, "It's really strong. This clamp is something I wish I had a long time ago! I don't have to worry about this coming loose when I'm playing."

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## EDDIE BAYERS

continued from page 27

of these situations. I used that to my advantage, to be able to give the illusion that the song was in more of a straight-four feel, when actually it was more of a shuffle.

We cut the song to a click, because there were only two of us there. Keyboardist Shane Keister and I discussed the situation, and I wanted to create a kick drum and a hi-hat pattern that I could overdub everything else over. The other objective was to create something unique-sounding. I used sounds out of my rack, like a combined kick drum and tom-tom sound for the kick drum. Then I used shakers and sequenced it. Using the sequence of that, I was able to play the rhythms on top of that. Then we decided to take the song out with the full kit.

**RF:** Do you work with many producers who dictate how they want something?

**EB:** That's very rare. Obviously that's true on jingles, where somebody might literally notate everything. The other thing we've done is combined notation with the numbers system we use in Nashville.

**RF:** For those who don't know, can you explain the numbers system?

**EB:** That's a situation where you're not locked into any key: The number used is relative to the diatonic scale. With that, you can create the I chord. No matter what key you're in there's always a tonic chord. If you're in the key of D, the I chord is D, the IV chord is G, the V chord is A. With that, you can obviously create sharps and flats. The other thing you can do, as far as inversions, is create a 2-over-4 sharp chord, and you can also split these numbers so that by the time you've written notation over the top, you know exactly where those things are going to fall. This way there's not a lot of transcribing going on in the room.

**RF:** Other than jingles, in what situations has it all been written out?

**EB:** I once did an album with Jimmy Webb, who was working with Glen Campbell. Harold Shedd was producing the album, but of course, Jimmy and Glen's collaboration went way back. So when Jimmy came in, he had a song that had a specific feel that he had written out for me. Not to take away from the

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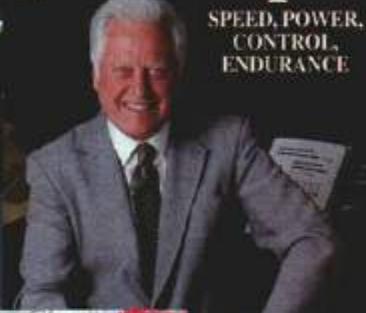
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## Jim Chapin



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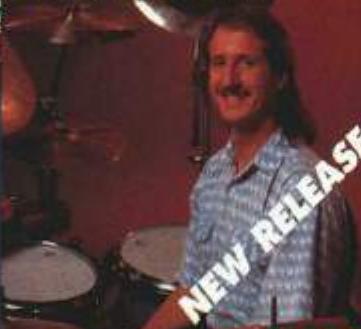
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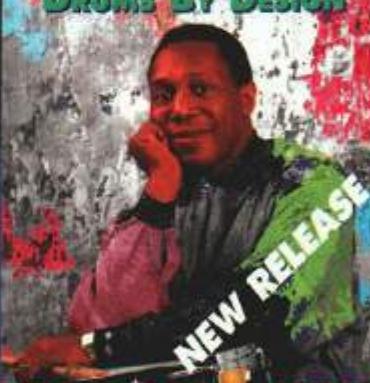
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song—it was a wonderful song—but the feel he had adapted to that was almost like Dionne Warwick. That's not what we would normally do to a song like that. It was easy enough to go in and say, "Jimmy, I can see right off that this is going to be kind of a dated feel for this," and he had no problem with that.

Once with producer Mike Post, what he had notated was fine for the feel of the verses and chorus, but I felt a little stifled with the fills he wrote going into the chorus and things like that, which he had not etched in stone either.

**RF:** What did you do with Mike Post?

**EB:** One thing was Dolly Parton's *Nine To Five* album. It was one of the first big projects I worked on, and I was excited, really up for it. I had it in my book, and then a week later, he called the engineer, who left a message with me that Mike wanted the drums to sound "like jet airplanes." Not having specifically talked to him, I, being new on major sessions, was wracking my brain. I called my friends, and of course, my closest friend in the drum world at that time was Larrie Londin. I said, "If somebody called and

said they wanted the drums to sound like jet airplanes, what would your response be?" And of course Larrie said, "I'd tell him he was full of shit."

**RF:** When you got in the studio, what did you do?

**EB:** I went in with the engineer, Marshall Morgan, and the whole time we were doing my drum sound prior to Mike Post getting there, we were going, "What in the devil?" We got what we liked, and then Mike came in and said, "Well, let me hear the drums." I hit the drums and he said, "Fine, let's get going." To this day I don't know what he had meant by jet airplanes.

These are the things we put ourselves through. This was my first experience doing that. A lot of us sometimes build things out of proportion. What I tell friends trying to get into the studios is to listen to the comments, but don't let them mess with you. You have to be yourself and have faith in what you can do.

I can see where somebody might come in intimidated, though. Unfortunately, I've been in situations like that, for

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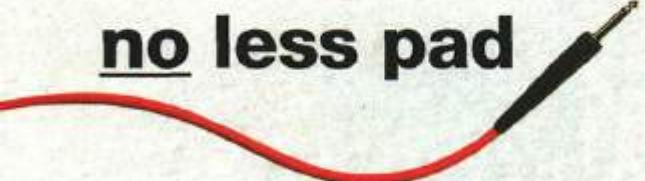
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instance that Delbert McClinton album that Barry Beckett produced [*I'm With You*]. I do a lot of Barry's work, and Barry was looking forward to my doing the album, whereas Delbert felt that he had his own drummer, who knew how to do all his feels. I have no problem with that, and that's the way it should be. But what happened with this drummer is that he knew of Barry's reputation—Paul Simon, Rod Stewart, Aretha Franklin, and on and on—but he had never

worked with him. Barry can come off very demanding, and he is, but not in a bad sense. But Barry said one thing about the feel not being there, and the drummer just folded up—they couldn't get anything out of him for the rest of the session. For some reason, when you talk about feel, drummers think it means just them. That's not true, it's everybody.

**RF:** Another fallacy about a drummer's responsibility that's often mentioned is

that if everyone seems to think that the music is rushing or dragging, it's only the drummer.

**EB:** Right. Of course, in the early days, somebody might have lost a job because of that, even though it was somebody else's fault. But today, the way I eliminate that is with the click, although I don't play the final take to a click. But I run that thing down with the click, and that's how I tell. When that click is going, it's easy to tell who's pushing and pulling. The click is not to be jumped on, though; it's just a reference for the center of the beat, and you let that work for you. It also makes it easier when you start with a specific tempo that the artist or producer says he wants.

**RF:** So why would a classically trained keyboardist like yourself switch to country music?

**EB:** Country came after the fact. A lot of the bands I got into initially were Top-40. There'd be a little country stuff in there, but mostly pop and rock.

**RF:** When you moved back to Nashville, what were you thinking you were going to do?

**EB:** I wanted to get into studio work.

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# PAiSTE

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**RF:** You had to know that was country music.

**EB:** Oh yes, but I had grown up with what Nashville had created in terms of pop, like the Everly Brothers, Roy Orbison, Elvis...a lot of it came from the south.

**RF:** Where did you actually learn to play country music?

**EB:** I think if any musician knows his instrument and loves playing it, the rest of it comes down to how he views and

listens to other music. Any music can be interpreted with the honesty of feeling that particular music has. I started becoming more subjected to country sessions, and some of those sound-alikes I did all those years were country, and I had to copy them. That was almost like going to school. Plus, it was with the original artists, so it allowed me to talk with these people and really break down those records to see what made them work.

There were people who I talked to in the early days who said, "I'm tired of lowering my intelligence doing this," and I said, "If that's the way you feel, you're obviously not going to play it well." Music, to me, is a feel. If your mind is open, you can absorb what is going on.

**RF:** What about those less than creative sessions where maybe the artist was a pain in the butt, or...?

**EB:** I don't think I've ever worked in a situation where the artist was like that. I think their wanting to make sure they were doing their best efforts in the specific time period might have made them difficult, like Bob Seger. He was one of the nicest people I've worked with, but you could tell he was under a lot of pressure. Plus, he had already cut 14 sides. I don't know a lot about those, I think he cut them with his band. But when Beckett began producing the project, he brought in the crew he works with a lot, enhanced with Bruce Hornsby playing piano and Bob's piano player on synth.

That was a situation where I had to think about why they called me. I didn't call them, so I was there to do what they wanted done. My mind was having to deal with that because we were doing ten

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**RF:** There seems to be such a small number of drummers in Nashville actually playing on albums. Though someone recently said that artists seem to be leaning more towards using their bands these days. Is that true?

**EB:** Obviously there are situations where the artist is living with the band and decides he should use them, or the band is egging the artist on. George Strait lets his band play on two or three songs on his albums, and it's great; there's a mixture there. But I think, on the whole, when you're talking about making an album, there is a certain amount of money to spend, and the producer and the artist are responsible for getting the job done in a certain time frame. There seems to be such a small number of people doing this, because in the past ten years, the producers who have come in have *created* the bands in Nashville. I'm in three or four bands. You know when you get together with these bands that it's second-nature, it's just a matter of which take you want.

**RF:** Not to belittle you, but certainly there must be other people who are qualified to do it.

**EB:** Without a doubt.

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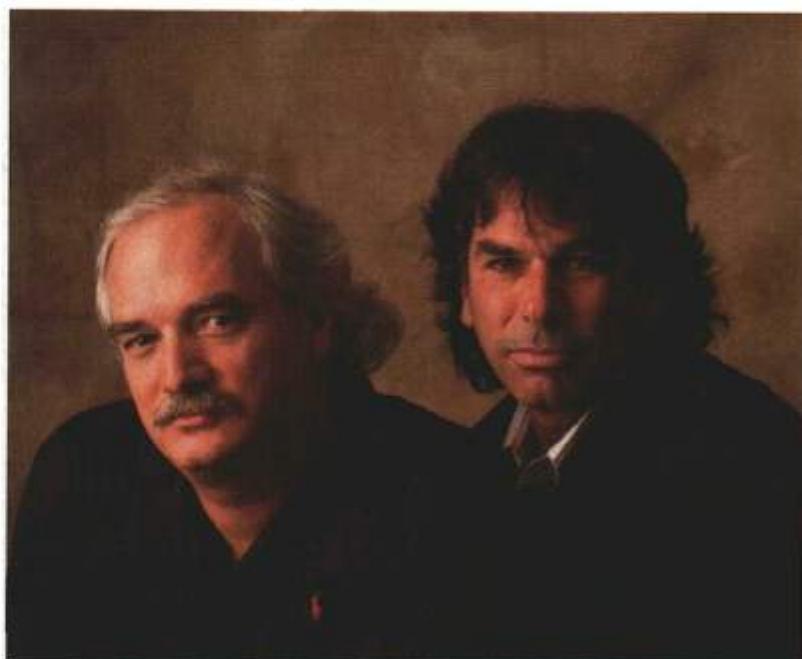
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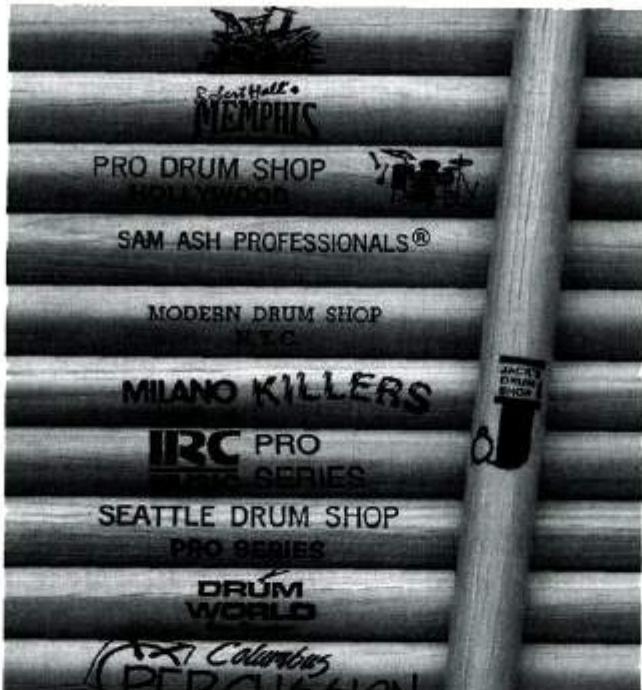


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**RF:** I remember a studio drummer friend of mine moving to Nashville at the time I was living there, and I called [producer] Kyle Lehning to ask if he could drop off a resume. Kyle said, "Sure, but I have to tell you, as long as there's an Eddie Bayers or a Larrie Londin, why would I use him?"

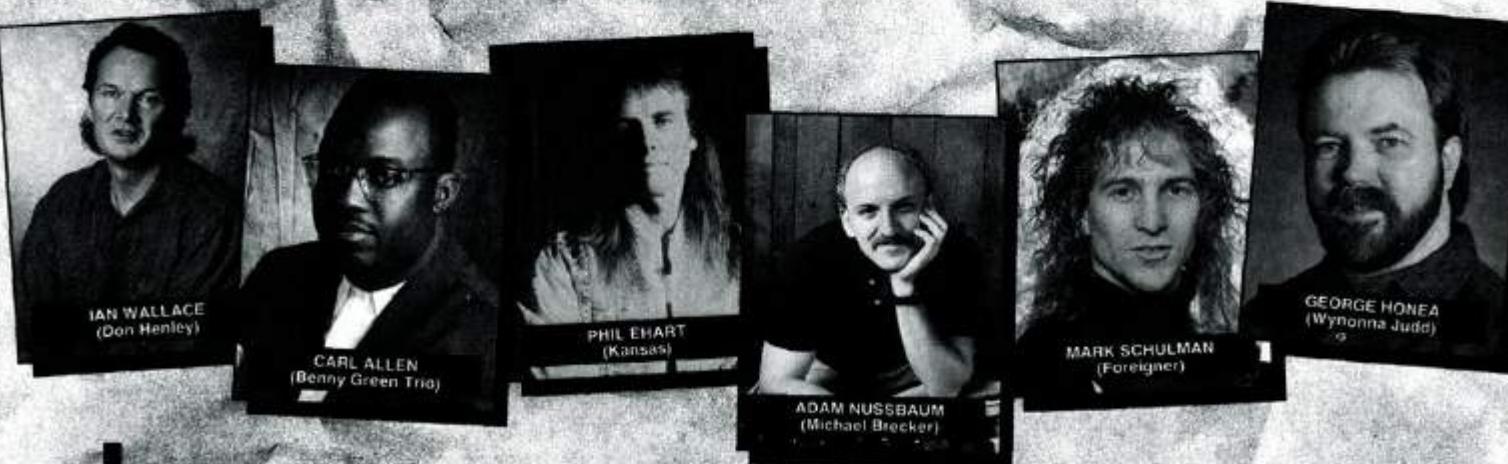
**EB:** I think what Kyle was saying was more, "I know that this guy works with this bass player, who works with this guitar player, and when they play, it's tight." It's the same kind of chemistry you see in bands. It's just like I couldn't go in with Restless Heart and play with them, not like John Dittrich does. I think the one thing we've been knowledgeable about in Nashville is the chemistry of players.

**RF:** Do you have an extensive electronic setup?

**EB:** I would say it's pretty conservative. It incorporates a sampler so that if there are things I want to sample and use again, I can do that. I also have sounds stored in there. I have a 16-channel mixer where I can mix three separate units together and have kick drum, snares, toms, and cross-sticks all incorporated in my sound.

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ment I'm put in, how I want the record to be. On something like Vince Gill's "When I Call Your Name," I incorporated maybe 60% acoustic sounds with 40% electronic sounds. On that song, everything was triggered, but the information was still miked acoustically. When people say, "Man, I want to hear pure drums," that's like saying, "Don't put any echo on the voice, don't compress the voice." A lot of engineers I work with like to use a sampled cross-stick, because of the gating they might use on the snare. When you hit a tom, the snare rattles, and using the sampled cross-stick helps eliminate that. Plus, they can control the balance between the sampled cross-stick and an open snare.

**RF:** With all the work you do, have you ever experienced a burnout period?

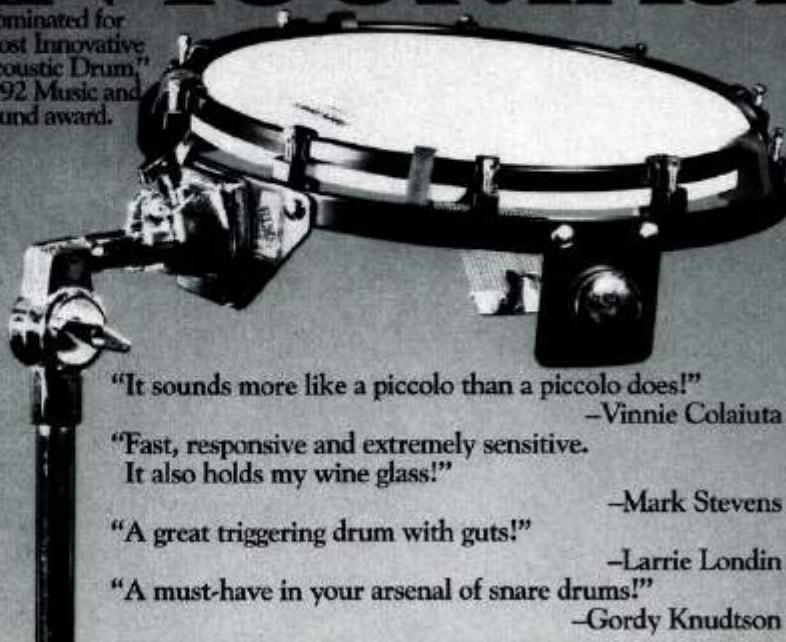
**EB:** I haven't had a burnout period. I love everything that I'm doing, and I have since I started. There is never a time that I get up in the morning and don't look forward to going to work.

**RF:** You sound a bit like a Pollyanna. It's okay not to like something.

**EB:** It might be because I laid on my back for eight and a half months. There's something about realizing that something has been taken from you that

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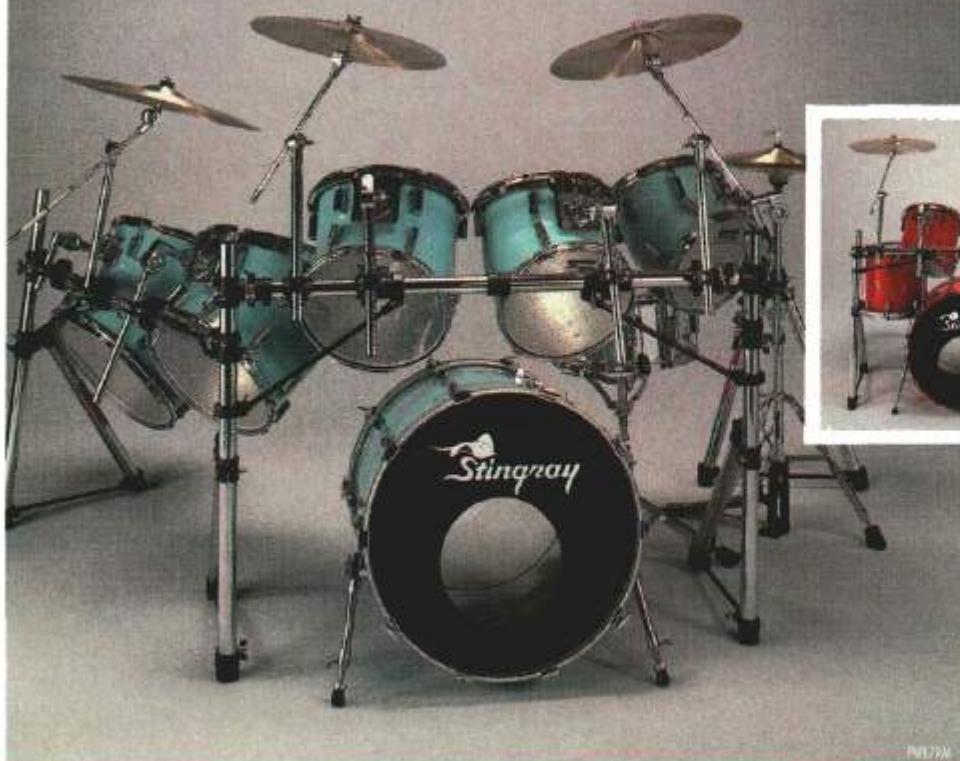
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# Tim McGinley: Modern-Day Circus Drummer

■ by Rick Van Horn

If you think drumming for the circus means playing Sousa marches and long rolls under a canvas tent—think again. Today's circus is a multi-media entertainment spectacle, and the music performed there is as contemporary as any you'd hear in a club or concert venue. And nobody demonstrates this fact better than Tim McGinley, currently with the Ringling Brothers and Barnum & Bailey circus.

Playing drums for "The Greatest Show On Earth" requires a variety of talents—and Tim comes well equipped for the job. Before joining the circus in 1989 at the ripe old age of 22, Tim had already established an extensive show-drumming career. "I've been on the road since I was 18 years old," says Tim. "After high school I worked on cruise ships, traveled with the Artie Shaw band, worked at hotels in Puerto Rico and Hawaii, and backed a variety of shows, comedians, and singers. Being almost exclusively a show drummer—rather than your typical Top-40 or rock band drummer—prepared me for the variety of my circus gig. In our current show, for example, I'm playing ten different styles in the first half alone."

Playing the music properly isn't Tim's only challenge. After all, this is still a circus. "I don't really get to focus on the music completely during the show—even though it might be fun stuff to play. I'm watching the acts and 'catching tricks'—which involves accenting what the performers are doing—either on the drums, on the cymbals, or with my electronics. I'm helping to make the action that people are seeing make sense to their ears, as well."

With as much music as is involved in each circus show, it's surprising to learn that Tim is not working from charts. "I've put together two shows from scratch," Tim comments. "No

other drummer played those shows before me, so I created my own parts. Each new circus show is built in our winter rehearsal home in Venice, Florida. Our musical director, Keith Green, will assemble the music as the acts are assembled. He'll tell me, 'This is a rock tune,' or, 'This is a Latin tune...then watch the act and catch tricks.' I learn the music simply by playing the show a thousand times over a four-week rehearsal period.

"When I first start out and don't know the order of things," Tim continues, "I just jot down notes for the styles: rock, Latin, second rock, 3/4, 2/4, gallop...whatever feels are coming up. That way, when the conductor throws his arm down, at least I know what kind of tune we're going into. It would be very difficult for another drummer to come in and play this show on short notice since there are no charts; he or she would have to get hold of a tape and learn it by ear. And even *that* might be a challenge, because in this show we feature Chinese and Mongolian acts that require ethnic music and sounds."

How did Tim prepare to play that special music? "It wasn't easy," he laughs. "When I was told we were going to be playing Mongolian music, I'll admit that I didn't even have a concept of what drums should sound like in that. But I listened to some tapes and really tried to cop the feel—and it was a lot of fun. I enjoy doing that, because I get to play around with a lot of different sounds."

Many of those "different sounds" are unusual combinations of acoustic instruments—such as timpani, Chinese and traditional cymbals, Remo Spoxe, bells, and blocks—created by Tim personally. Still others are produced via electronics—yet another unusual situation for a "circus band" drummer. "I decide what sounds I'm going to use and program them myself," Tim explains. "Nobody tells me what sounds to use. It's the same as with what I play: Nobody tells me how or where to catch a trick; that's up to me. I always try to do what best supports the act, because my timing can be as critical as theirs to the successful performance of their act. My accent needs to be there with their flourish."

It's one thing to learn or create the music, but how does Tim learn the "kicks" for the various acts? "Simply by watching them in rehearsal," he replies. "Everything that I play—trick-wise—during the show, I get to make up. And I can do it differently every day, as long as it makes sense. I can't catch somebody's big finale trick with a smack on a cowbell, for instance. But I can literally play whatever I want, and on days

"As long as  
I can see all  
three rings,  
the front and  
back tracks,  
and the  
conductor—  
at the same  
time—I'm  
straight."



when my chops are up and I want to 'try out some stuff,' this is a perfect forum. It's a drummer's gig. The problem is that when I'm *not* up—when I just want to come in and play the show—it's a hard show to play. It's hard just to sit there and not give it any energy. You kind of get taken up in it, and whether you feel like it or not, you end up playing pretty hard."



Isn't it difficult for only *one* drummer to see and catch tricks being performed in a *three-ring* circus? "As long as I can see all three rings, the front and back tracks, and the conductor—at the same time—I'm straight," Tim says, laughing. "Once you've seen these acts—or these *kinds* of acts—a few hundred times, you get to know what they're going to do. There will be a certain type of pacing and feeling for each type of act. As a circus drummer, I have my bag of tricks to use for each type of trick. There are only so many things each kind of act can do, and there are only so many things I can do on the drums."

Circus is a venerable form of entertainment, and old traditions die hard, as Tim has experienced. "There are a couple of old circus drummers who come around the show these days and don't think the music should be played on a drumset," he explains. "They'd rather see the traditional bass drummer and snare drummer. There'd still be a *tuba* here if some people had their way. And in fact, I've heard tapes of this show done as recently as 1976 or '77, and it was still all marches and gallops and waltzes. It sounded good, but times change. In theory, circus music is supposed to be the popular music of its day. So now we're playing rock 'n' roll. In fact, we have a contemporary rock singing group called 'N Motion as part of the show, which is very unusual for a circus. It's an attempt to appeal to MTV-oriented kids. We play all of their tunes, which are straight-ahead pop backbeat stuff. It's the closest I've ever come to playing a full-on arena rock concert."

As contemporary as Tim's gig with the circus may be, he enjoys one aspect that's still very traditional: the manner in which the circus band travels. "We all live on the circus train on a band car," he says, "criss-crossing the country just as circuses have done for a hundred years. It's a lot of fun to hang out with all the various performers. Of course, moving the show from the train yard to the venue is a whole other story. But luckily, I'm not involved in any of that!"

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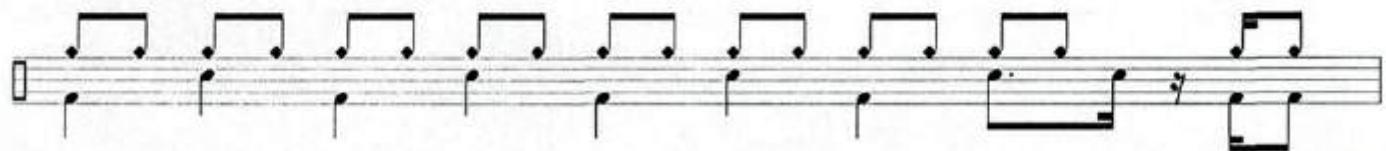
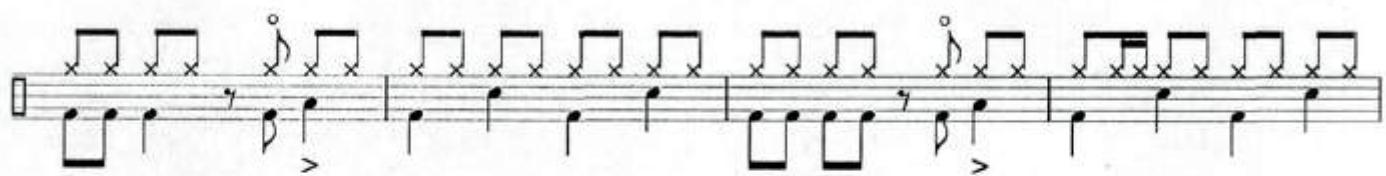
# Bill Bruford: "Silent Talking"

■ Transcribed by Ed Tarzia

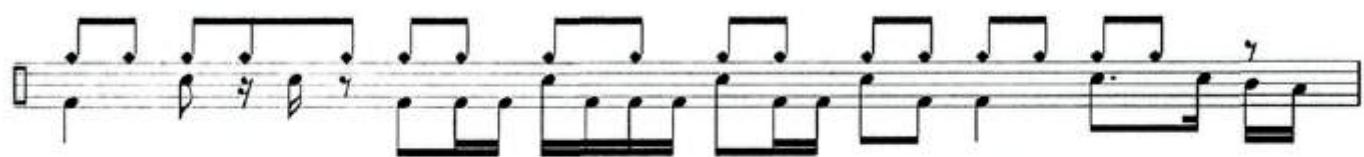
This month's *Rock Charts* focuses on Bill Bruford's work on the last Yes release, *Union* (Arista AR-8643). On "Silent Talking," Bill once again proves himself as one of the most creative drummers working today. The piece is quite complicated, with odd meters, changing meters, and abnormal phrasing. Bill navigates through it all, and even takes it to another level by playing very syncopated parts on top of all the other shifting rhythms. Put the disc on, look at the music, and start counting!



The sheet music consists of five staves of drum notation. The first staff starts in 4/4, then changes to 19/8, then to 4/4 again. The second staff starts in 19/8. The third staff starts in 18/8. The fourth staff starts in 4/4. The fifth staff starts in 4/4. The notation includes various drum strokes (e.g., vertical lines for bass drum, horizontal lines for snare, diagonal lines for hi-hat, and 'x' marks for tom-toms) and rests. Some strokes have small circles or dots above them, indicating specific attack points or accents.







## STEVE GORMAN

continued from page 31

never had any to play. The day I finally bought my first kit, I rehearsed with my band. That's what we were waiting on: 'Okay, now we can rehearse.'

"For my parents," Steve explains, "drums weren't an option, with me being the youngest of eight kids. Growing up in a small town in Kentucky, playing drums didn't make a lot of sense. It was basically a place where everyone would play sports in high school and do those kinds of things. That's kind of helped me in the long run because I never sat in my basement alone, trying to do Keith Moon's fills or Ginger Baker's drum solos, like a lot of drummers you see. Drummers have spent years doing that crap, and that's all meaningless to me because I just like songs and records."

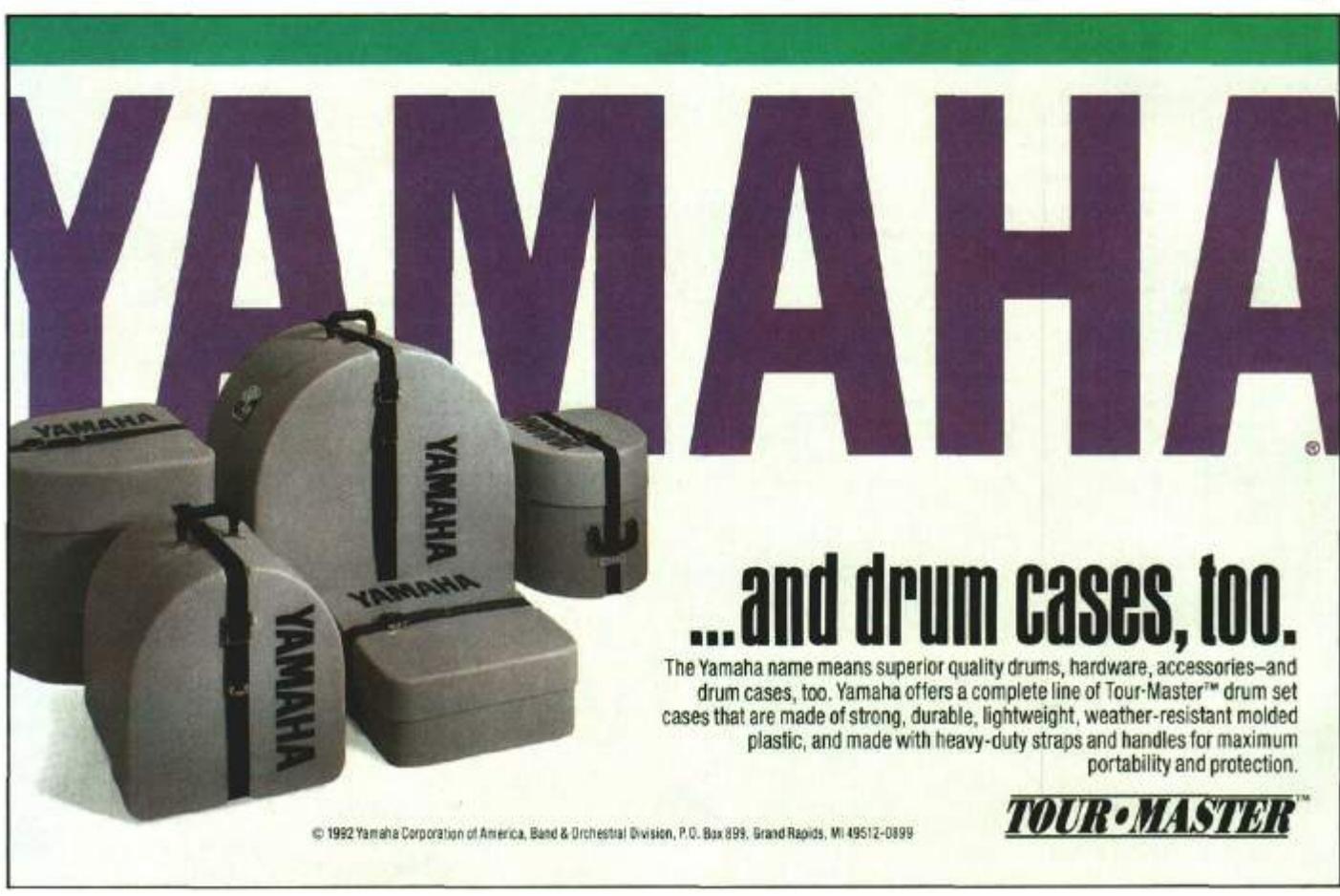
When Steve finally got his hands on a real kit, which he borrowed from a friend before moving to Atlanta, he practiced by playing along with records. "I couldn't figure out how the different drummers were doing certain things," he recalls, "but I realize now that it wasn't neces-

sarily all recorded live. Some drummers also had things like double kick pedals, which I didn't know existed. I'd be like, 'How the hell did he do that?' and I would try to do it on my own. There were all sorts of things that I would try to mimic. I'm sure I wasn't doing it perfectly, but it made sense to me at the time."

Steve's path to playing with the Black Crowes was anything but premeditated. "Early on in college I thought that drumming was a cool little hobby, and that was as far as I would ever take it. My thinking was: You just don't go and get into a band. I thought that was for other people who were predestined to do it. Then it dawned on me that I was wasting a lot of time in school when I wasn't into it. I had no business sitting in class, paying for college, when there were other things that I wanted to do. I had a buddy who said, 'Let's go to Atlanta and put a band together.' I just did it, and I met [Crowes front man] Chris Robinson the day I moved down here."

Gorman, Robinson, and a few other musicians shared a house together in Atlanta, and soon the singer and drummer became tight friends. Robinson decided to put a band together with Steve, and that's how the Crowes were born. "It wasn't such a big thing," Steve explains. "I had helped Chris do a demo, and he just said, 'I guess you're in the band now.' It wasn't a big thing at all, it just seemed like the thing to do. The band I was working with when I first got to Atlanta wasn't doing very much, and Chris and I were great friends. [Guitarist] Rich Robinson and I also got along, and I liked their music. I didn't think about it more than a second."

Getting back to *The Southern Harmony And Musical Companion*, where the Crowes' first effort, *Shake Your Money Maker*, held promise in musical aptitude, the second delivers. It's readily apparent that Steve's drumming benefited from close to two years of touring. "This new album is a whole different world from the first one," he declares. "I think the



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first record was made by a bunch of guys with good songs, which we all felt confident about. But as far as being musicians...! was a guy in a band, but never considered myself a 'musician.'

"I always felt that you went in to record, you played the songs, and that was it," Gorman explains. "We did that the first time, and that came across as having a good feel, and people said, 'It sounds so fresh.' But during our 20-month, 350-show first tour, we soon realized that we had to really hone our skills. Every night I tried to go a little bit further to feel better about what I played. It's not just me, the whole band is doing that: We're all learning to play together and working to improve individually.

"It's this whole process that happens when you're not paying attention to it," he says. "I was looking for that in the first six weeks, thinking, 'Aren't we all supposed to start melding together?' After these past two years have come and gone, we've realized that, concerning our music, everything we always talked about

wanting to be, we were. That was a pretty nice feeling.

"Making the first record three years ago was all we thought about for a long time," Gorman continues. "It was like, 'We have to make this record.' Then we got in there and had headphones on and it was like, 'What the hell is this? I can't move my head around.' So I learned to tape headphones to my head. In the middle of playing a song someone says, 'Hold it. We've got a problem back in the booth,' and you've got to stop playing in the middle of a song. There's a lot of starting and stopping and downtime. All we knew about was playing live.

Steve explains that the biggest problems the band had the first time out were mental. "We were not mentally prepared to do it," he recalls. "With the new record, we weren't worried about all that because we had learned. We did all the tracks in eight days. [Bassist] Johnny Colt and I took four days. We started on a Friday night and were done Monday. As weird as that sounds, we got sounds Fri-

day morning, and that night we were taping and listening: 'Okay, that's done. Let's go to the next one.' 'Morning Song' was one take, 'Sometime Salvation' was two. It just flowed."

"Sometime Salvation," in fact, is one of the stand-out drum tracks off *Southern Harmony*. The song builds up, with Steve's drumming being a bit more dramatic to suit the arrangement. Gorman contends, though, that the band has no dialog about the songs themselves and how they'll ultimately sound. "We rehearsed for a few weeks at Chris's house to learn the songs, because all but two of them were brand new. Every time we'd go over the songs it wasn't a matter of, 'You do this and this for that song.' Johnny and I are more concerned with playing *together* than with the exact parts that we're playing—the main thing is we want it to sound like a song. So we didn't map it out at all. We'd come down to the studio, shoot some pool or play some ping-pong, have a few beers, and order in some food. We'd always have music

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blaring and we'd just slip into this mode where we were so relaxed that we slid into the mindsets of the songs. We never talked to each other at all about the songs or what we were gonna play—everyone was just hangin' out.

"When we come up with a song and play it over a few months, the song just seems to find itself," Gorman explains. "This new record is our chance to walk everything we've been talking for the last two and a half years. Every night of this tour we have a definite objective in mind—though there'll be five different objectives depending on who you ask."

So what's Steve's objective for this tour? "I just feel that by example, we're showing people how this is supposed to be done," he responds. "What I mean is that we're a band that is doing everything our way. Everybody out there should be doing things their own way too, without any bullshit from their label, or listening to pressure from their manager. Just do what you do. We've certainly done a lot of talking since the last

album—everybody clearly speaks their mind in this band—and this album and the ensuing tour say, 'See, we're not full of shit. This is what's right for us.'

"I can't imagine any other way of doing it," Steve says. "I don't understand people who take twelve months to do a record. The songs are either there or they're not. After playing 350 shows, you should be able to come into the studio and play a few songs right away. If you haven't gotten anything out of all that touring, why the hell do it?"

"But we do put pressure on ourselves," he adds. "We talked up a storm during the last tour, and now we have to live up to that with this record. We listen to this album and say, 'Damn, this is a better one than the first.' It's everything we wanted it to be. Everywhere there's growth, and it's growth in the right directions. I can still listen to this record three times a day and think, 'Hell, yes!' It's nice to hear this one and see how far we've come since the last one. If we do that every time, then it's a scary thought

what the next one will be like."

The Crowes are basically a live band in the studio. Rhythm guitar, bass, and drums are recorded together, with vocals and lead guitar overdubbed. Getting just the right drum sound for a band that basically dispenses with frivolities is just as straightforward as you would expect. Steve explains: "We get our drum sounds in about thirty minutes. I found this '56 Gretsch kit here in Atlanta at a music store. It's got a great gold-sparkle finish, and the drums weigh a ton each. There's a 20" kick, a 14" floor, and a 12" rack, and that's it. Someone saw it in this shop and told me to go over and see it, and when I did, I thought, 'Man, this is it.' We brought it over to the studio, miked it up, and I played for about twenty minutes. I walked into the control room, and the guys told me that they had gotten the sounds right away. It was that easy. We did use different snares for different songs—about three or four. But the kit was that tiny kick, floor, and rack. That's it."

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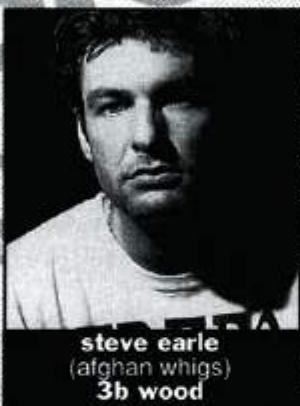
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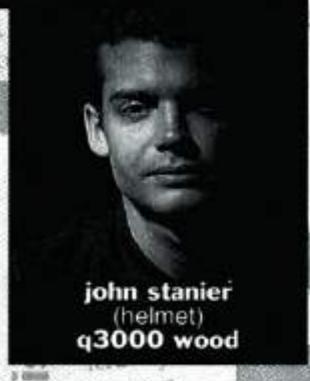
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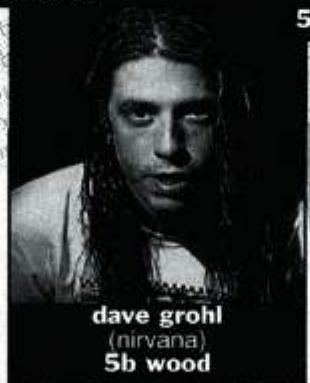
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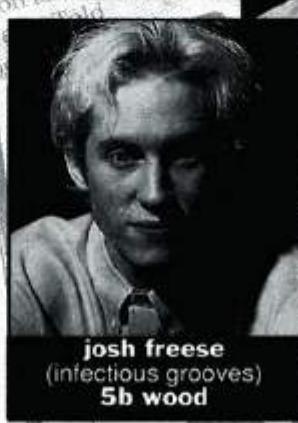
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Steve says that the fragility of that kit will make it impossible to bring on the road, though. "I've got a couple of kits that are very similar," he explains, "so I'm taking a tiny kit out with the same dimensions. I couldn't take that one out because it would get beat up, and I wouldn't be able to replace the hardware. I'm not a big collector of vintage drums, but I know what sound I like and what works for me, and that kit did. I guess they don't make drums like that anymore. When you just hit the drums on their own, they sound like shit. But when you put microphones on them and step back, they sound like cannons. It's fabulous. Any old Gretsch kits are fine, so just send them my way," he laughs.

Although the Black Crowes are a multi-platinum headlining act, they have surprisingly opted to forego an arena tour this year in favor of playing theaters. Smaller venues mean less money (a factor that Steve says the band is not concerned with), but in sacrificing the cash, the group will be able to play in much more intimate atmospheres and garner a

far superior live sound. Steve is particularly pleased about that. "I like to have a boomy, very heavy kick drum sound and a good cracking snare," he comments. "This year, doing theaters, we can make a difference in what sounds come out of that big EA. When you're playing outdoor or arena shows, all you want to do is make sure that people can hear you. When the sound is that loud, you could be hitting a trash can and it wouldn't make much of a difference."

As far as the specific parts he plays, Gorman admits that he's open to creative suggestions from the rest of the guys in the band. "Every song comes about differently," he explains. "Sometimes Chris and Rich will spend a whole day writing a song, and it will be finished—even the arrangements will be done. Chris will sometimes say, 'Give me something like this,' and he'll tap out something that he's had in his mind all day. Other times, one of them will say, 'Here's a new song. Think along these lines.' That's all they have to say, and I'm off and running."

"Chris and I have known each other for years, and he's been right there critiquing me or bitching at me or supporting me for as long as I've been playing," Steve says. "He trusts my playing and I trust his judgement. For other songs, I have to come up with whatever feels right. I play it, so I have the final say, but when we're putting the songs together, everyone is a drummer—everyone has ideas and everyone throws this and that at me. I like to just play the song with as many different ideas as I can think of, then whatever works, works. With 'Sometime Salvation,' that drum part is so insane with all these different parts. That was what came from inside my head—just all these different ideas. It fit, in spite of all the weird parts to it, so no one really suggested that I change it."

Does Steve consider himself an emotional player, and does he think he reveals himself through his drumming? "I don't really know," he remarks. "I think I'm really sympathetic in that I'm playing for the song, but I'm definitely an emotional drummer when I'm playing

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live. I'll play different things depending on the day I'm having. If I'm in a great mood, I'm drumming to beat the band: I want everything to break and I want my hands to bleed. On the other hand, in the studio it can actually be *more* emotional in that I can hear everything that's being played because I have headphones on, and the toms are right in my ears. I feel like I'm in total control of what I'm doing. Live, the monitors can go out or someone in the audience can throw something up on stage, and you just don't have total control. But in the studio, that's when you can just cruise along.

"During the recording of this last record, I definitely had a lot of stuff going through my head. One part of my mind was focused on watching my time, while another part was thinking about pushing and pulling with Johnny and Rich. I'm not the only one responsible for the tempos, though. We do that as a rhythm section—we all push and pull together.

"It's a great feeling when you're in

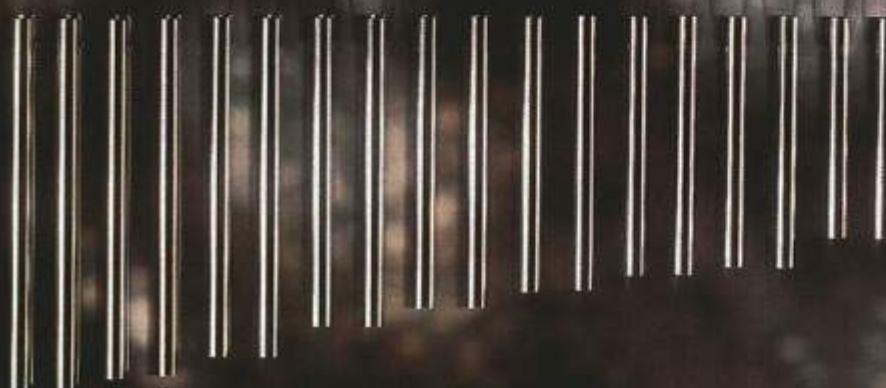
your favorite band," Gorman enthuses. "I just love what we play, and I just love our songs. When I joined the band, we sounded a lot different than we do now because we were all learning this. But even then, Chris and Rich wrote great songs. On the first two-track demo we ever did, we sounded like a band. Chris, Rich, and I had the same mindset back then. Even though we had a different bass player and guitarist back then, we knew what we wanted to do. The band has become this great thing to me, and we're out there just getting it done. There's a lot of joy in this. It's all about the music, and when we're on stage, it's a really cool feeling because we all get a lot out of it. It literally goes in slow motion some nights because it feels so good."

There have been nights on the road when the Crowes got hold of that evening's taped performance, although they don't make a habit of scrutinizing every live show. Steve says that the experience was helpful. "When we toured with Aerosmith, there was a time that we

started doing it, but it was never for the purpose of listening to separate parts," he offers. "We listened to it as a whole. It does help in that you do have to be aware of what you're doing, and there are things that I found I do that just don't come across the P.A.—little ghost strokes and accents. You have to learn to do those things in a way so they come across. So hearing tapes for that is good, and also it's good to sit back and listen just to come up with parts. If we come up with a new song at soundcheck, we'll play it that night. So it's good to listen to a new song to learn what will sound best.

"When I come up with a cool thing on my own, it's usually during a soundcheck when I'm just fooling around, and it's usually something that will never fit in a song. That goes back to what I was saying earlier about not having sat in my basement, playing alone for five years. You see these drummers who are in their first bands after playing alone in their basement for ten years, and that's just trouble. All they hear is drums, and that's all they want to hear.

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"I remember reading a rare interview with John Paul Jones," Steve continues. "He was talking about why he loved to play with John Bonham, and he said it was because Bonham played so sympathetically to the song. That's a word that I've heard a lot of people use to describe some people's playing since then, but I thought it was my own word. [laughs] But with Bonham, you almost get the feeling that on some of the earlier records he hadn't really heard the songs that much, but he was listening as hard as he was playing. The feeling I get is that it's really a band in a room, and it's not too planned out. Sometimes when you're in the studio, you do get up there and wing it, and it works best."

Gorman contends that his drumming has more to do with his interaction with the rest of the Crowes' rhythm section than with any of his own doing. "In this band, if I like something I play, it's because I play off of Johnny. If I'm doing something that seems really flashy, he's

right under me just pumping along. When I think of my playing, I think of me and Johnny and Rich as a unit. I think we complement each other so well, and when I think of my drumming, I think of us as a rhythm section. I can't separate the two."

Steve insists that he hasn't spent a lot of time "talking drums" with anybody over the years, not even with other drummers. "I'm not analytical about drumming at all," he explains. "I have enough hang-ups and things going on in my life that I just don't think too much about it. It's what I do and it's very important to me, but over the last year, I've spent a lot of time looking at a lot of things about me as a person. My drumming is one thing I don't have to spend a lot of time thinking about because so far it's worked. I'm where I want to be and where I need to be...so I'll go and worry about something else."

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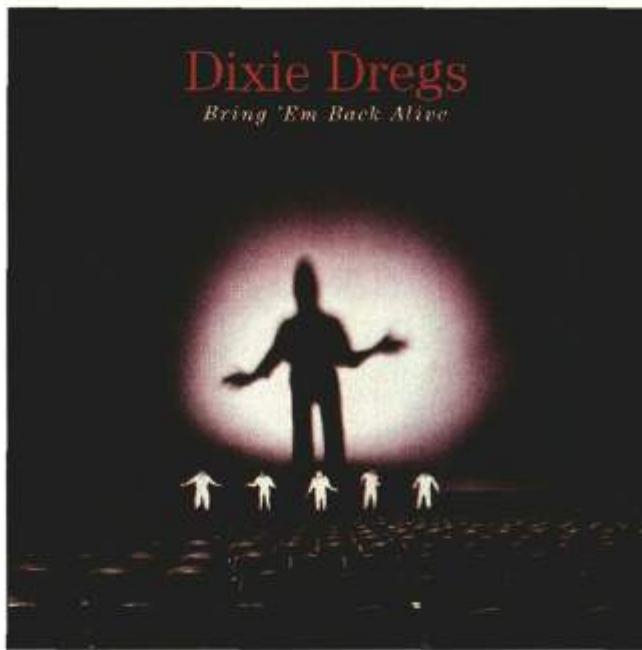
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## RECORDINGS



## DIXIE DREGS

Bring 'Em Back Alive

Capricorn 9 42005-2

ROD MORGESTEIN: dr

STEVE MORSE: gtr

T LAVITZ: kybd

ALLEN SLOAN: vln

DAVE LARUE: bs

Road Expense; Assembly Line; Holiday; Country House Shuffle; Kashmir; Odyssey; Kat Food; Hereafter; Medley (Take It Off The Top); Divided We Stand; Bloodsucking Leeches; Cruise Control

The first musical sound you hear on this album is Rod Morgenstein's drumsticks clicking off the tempo to "Road Expense." How anyone can convey energy and excitement through four mere stick clicks is beyond me, but he does it, and the music that follows is a joyous celebration by a band that is clearly savoring every note they play—and there are a *lot* of notes.

Fans who prefer Morgenstein's inventive playing with the Dregs and Steve Morse over his more straight-ahead

work with Winger will undoubtedly rejoice over his performance here. Indeed, it's as if his formidable chops have been let out of a cage and are enjoying their freedom to the fullest. But his heavy rock playing has given even his odd-time grooves an internal authority that was missing before. And when the band launches into the Zeppelin classic "Kashmir," Morgenstein slams home a classic less-is-more beat that proves everything you've ever heard about *how* you play being more important than *what* you play.

Of course, the ultimate goal is to be a master of both *how* and *what*, which Morgenstein proves himself to be. As he mixes simple and complex drumming throughout the album, each type of playing puts the other in perspective.

Sometimes, when groups reunite, one senses that they are simply trying to recapture past glories. But the playing

on this album suggests that the Dregs spirit is not only alive, it's virtually exploding out of the band after having been locked up for a while. It's not merely a reunion, it's a rebirth.

• **Rick Mattingly**

## JOHN McLAUGHLIN TRIO

Que Alegria

Verve 837 280-2

JOHN McLAUGHLIN: gtr

TRILOK GURTU: perc

DOMINIQUE Di PIAZZA,

KAI ECKHARDT: bs

Belo Horizonte; Bobo; Reincarnation;

1 Nite Stand; Marie; Hijacked; Mila

Repa; Que Alegria; 3 Willows



Twenty years after the Mahavishnu Orchestra exploded into the consciousness of "fusioners," we have a John McLaughlin recording that points towards a *new* fusion. This trio at first seems very distant from the aggressive high energy of Mahavishnu, or even the acoustic intensity of Shakti. But if you listen carefully—and the spaces here are as important in this group as the notes played—you will come away convinced that McLaughlin is leading the way once again.

This leadership is in the form of harmony and interaction, and in Trilok Gurtu, McLaughlin has his worthiest percussionist to date. Whether playing tabla on "Reincarnation," a multi-leveled layer

of percussion on the title track, or his unique drumkit, Gurtu has the chops of Cobham, the complexity of Hussain, and the individuality of...well...Gurtu. He is the most rounded drummer—oh, hell—musician ever to play with McLaughlin.

To get a sense of his genius, listen to Gurtu whenever McLaughlin plays a run. Trilok, without losing the beat, incorporates the rhythmic figure, shoots it back, and then reinvents and reintroduces it into the song's melody. The first time I heard Gurtu "dialog" like this with McLaughlin, I thought it was an accident. Now I think it may be a miracle.

This band is more than just the sum of its players. It is a solid, harmonically complex trio capable of showing the way towards a world fusion music more exciting than the music of the 1970s.

• **Adam Ward Seligman**

## D'CUCKOO

D'Kayla 1992

CANDICE PACHECO: synth gtr, synth bs, turtle dr, kybd, vcl

PATTI CLEMENS: bs, elec mmb, kybd, turtle dr, vcl

TINA "BEAN" BLAINE: elec mmb, kybd, turtle dr, vcl

TINA "Rip" PHELPS: turtle dr, elec

mmb, vcl

One World; No One Receiving; Love Again; The Whole World; Somebody Else's Dreams; Distant Worlds; Maya (The Dream); Gems; Slice; Talk It; 1000 Miles; Cyber

Embracing the DIY (do it yourself) method more thoroughly than most bands would have the talent or patience to, California's D'Cuckoo is also producing some of the most unusual and broad-minded contemporary music today.



That most of their sounds are generated from self-made electronic percussion instruments ("turtle drums" and electronic marimbas, for instance) makes them even more intriguing.

D'Cuckoo taps into both the most advanced and ancient aspects of drumming. The individuals' resumes tell most of the story: Each has extensive experience in performance, electronic music programming, traditional/tribal drumming, and music composition. This vast background results in D'Cuckoo's fresh blend of rhythm, harmony, and sound.

Some musical antecedents of D'Cuckoo's music are Peter Gabriel, *Remain In Light*-period Talking Heads, and Brian Eno, whose "No One Receiving" D'Cuckoo stylishly covers here. (Is it my imagination, or are some of those "gulping" sounds nicked from the original?) None of this would be terribly interesting, though, if D'Cuckoo didn't bring a bit of themselves to the mix, which they thankfully do. Lots of nice harmonies, an uncanny knack for keeping a very expanded palette of sounds from ever sounding too busy, and some strong pop structures put the band way past mere influence peddlers or

goofy sound pushers. And the "virtual audio" 2-track remixing process helps the home-grown sounds leap around your headphones as joyously as the neo-tribal harmonies.

*D'Cuckoo*, in the true DIY spirit, is an independently released CD, and can be obtained by contacting *Aisle of Women Productions*, 6114 La Salle Ave., Ste. 414, Oakland, CA 94611, (415) 488-1309. Tracking this CD down would be one fine way of hearing just how "modern" today's drumming can be.

• Adam Budofsky

### SPIN DOCTORS

*Pocket Full Of Kryptonite*

Epic ZK 47461

AARON COMESS: dr, perc, org

MARK WHITE: bs

ERIC SHANKMAN: gtr, vcl

CHRISTOPHER BARRON: vcl

Jimmy Olsen's Blues; What Time Is It?; Little Miss Can't Be Wrong; Forty Or Fifty; Refrigerator Car; More Than She Knows; Two Princes; Off My Line; How Could You Want Him?; Shinbone Alley



Lumped in with Deadhead bands like Phish and Blues Traveler, the Spin Doctors are, flat out, funkier and harder-edged than those eclectic outfits. In drummer Comess they have a groove-happy player a la Steve Jordan (he even tunes his toms high and his snare cracking like the slapmaster

himself) who has a fondness for incorporating drum-corps-style drum rolls over his sassy pocket.

On "What Time Is It?" the Doctors punch out a souped-up, James Brown-ish groove, going heavy metal on the chorus with Comess playing propulsive tom-bass triplets in the rests. The drummer rides the tune out with light, Latin double sticking on hi-hat and floor tom over a descending barrage of radio cross-talk and bass guitar rhythms. "Refrigerator Car" features Comess's flashy chops, an open-stroked cadence that switches the downbeat over the intro straightens out on the verses. Resurrecting the ghost of Joe Walsh's James Gang, "Off My Line" is more boiling funk, a wailing harmonica providing the hook.

The Spin Doctors are a gyrating mangle of hyper rhythms, bluesy melodies, and in-your-face intentions. They'll make you sweat.

• Ken Micallef

### RYAN KISOR

*Minor Mutiny*

Columbia CK 48796

RYAN KISOR: trp, flghn

RAVI COLTRANE: sx

LONNIE PLAXICO: bs

MICHAEL CAIN: pno

JEFF SEIGEL, JACK DEJOHNETTE: dr

One For Miles; Ebony; Minor Mutiny; Little Nick; Exotic Isles; The Invisible; A New Day; Somewhere In The Dark; For Erin

Trumpeter Ryan Kisor makes an impressive debut here, on a major label and in very good company. Jack DeJohnette produced the album and played on his own "Ebony" and "Exotic Isles" (the latter of which also



appeared on Jack's *Parallel Realities* album). DeJohnette's role here is that of enabler, a firm but unobtrusive presence in the background.

Jeff Seigel, by contrast, is given full rein, and to good effect. He is aggressive and clean on "Miles," his high toms recalling the late genius's old friend Max Roach. (Extremely dry cymbals suggest the two drummers shared Jack's kit!)

The title track moves from Afro-Cuban 6/8 to samba to swing with natural ease, fueled by Seigel's forward energy and abundantly attractive ideas. On the uptempo Latin "Nick," his glassy cymbal rolls and scampering fills pave the way for an exciting solo. Placid, well integrated triplets between skin and metal reveal "The Invisible"; similarly, "Dark" inhabits another world. "Erin" is poignantly placed, with blossoming cymbals, fluttering brushes, and a lovely ending that, like a goodnight kiss, promises the best is yet to come.

• Hal Howland

*Critique continues on next page*

## VINX

Love My Job

IRS/Pangaea X2-13152

VINX: perc, gtr, vcl

BILL SUMMERS, DARRYL MUNYUNGO

JACKSON, ANGEL FIGUEROA: perc

PATRICE RUSHEN: kybd

ZAP MAMA: ensemble vcl

MARK E. SMITH: vcl

and other musicians

Kinda Surprised; Double Bon; Heartbreak; At Play In The Heather; Do Ya; Standing On Comers; There I Go Again; This Time You're On Your Own; Spandex Ballet; Keeping It To Myself; Zap Rap; Just Might Be The One; Squeeze You; Gysasi Salif; Touch My Heart; Never No Never; Angels Talk In Their Sleep; Choosey Mama



Vinx is a singer and percussionist who blends his soothing baritone with African, Caribbean, and Latin rhythms in some catchy songs, resulting in a highly personal musical statement. Imagine a classic R&B voice like those of Sam Cooke or even Al Jarreau singing a cappella over a boisterous percussion troupe, and you might get a hold on Vinx's magic. This, his second album, sounds like a modern version of the '60s Brazilian soundtrack *Black Orpheus*—Olatunji meets Harry Belafonte meets the Spinners.

While Vinx's conga slapping is expressive (he's accompanied here by, among

others, drummers who got their start with Miles Davis), it's his yearning voice, alternately full of both anguish and joy, that makes you listen. *On I Love My Job*, Vinx strips away the artifice of commercial music, leaving us with the basics: melody, rhythm, and his unique talent.

Ken Micallef

## VIDEO

### SIMON PHILLIPS

DCI Music Video

641 Avenue Of The Americas

New York NY 10011

Time: 60 minutes

Price: \$39.95



It was a bitterly cold day this past February when a colleague and I trekked down to the NFL Film studios to witness the making of the new Simon Phillips video. The state of the art facility (the largest on the east coast) contains several audio and video production rooms. While watching this video you may only see Simon (and bassist Anthony Jackson and guitarist Ray Russell), but behind the scenes there were over 25 technical experts on hand—from directors and

audio engineers to cameramen and makeup artists. This technical excellence, combined with Simon's obvious concern for quality, has resulted in one of the finest drum videos to date.

The concept for this video revolves around three original Phillips tunes. The video begins with "Outback," an uptempo double-bass shuffle in 6. The first thing you'll notice is how good this video sounds. In fact, during the shoot, Simon, who had final say on the production, was extremely focused on the sound quality. (He used his own kit, for instance, and brought along his own mic's—Simon wanted to be sure to capture *his* sound.)

Simply from a production standpoint, this video is top-notch. Every camera angle is right where it should be, whether it be right next to Simon's feet for a complicated double-bass pattern or looking straight down from above for a roundhouse fill. Screen-within-screen shots are employed, and even though Simon's kit may be large, everything he does is visible.

After the performance of "Outback," Simon discusses some of the drumming techniques in the song, including demonstrating the different patterns he played slowed down. He carefully describes just about every aspect of what he's doing, and within the specific explanations he offers a lot of pertinent comments regarding more general topics, such as pedal tensioning, using dynamics effectively, relaxation, and posture. "Outback," for instance, is a double-bass

tune, and Simon covers that topic with refreshing insight.

The next tune performed is "Cosmos," a medium-tempo rock piece that Simon uses to delve into timekeeping and working with a click. A nice idea here is that we are allowed to hear a portion of the song played again, this time listening to what *Simon* was hearing in his headphone mix. (Sitting in one of the control rooms during taping, I witnessed Simon play "spot on" with the click every time, no matter how complex the song.)

In the next section, Simon solos over a portion of "V8" (a tune that originally appeared on his solo disc) and demonstrates how one might approach soloing over a click. After that, he does a free-form solo, offering up a lot of fun technical and musical ideas.

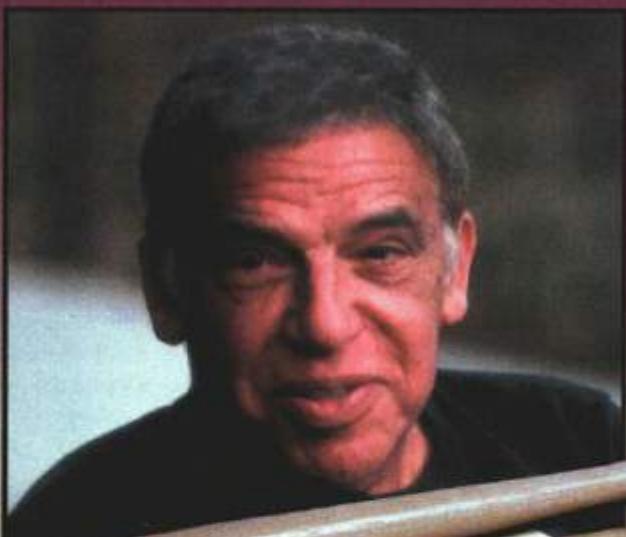
The last segment of the tape is based around the tune "Force Majeure," a quasi-Latin/fusion piece. Before playing the tune with the group, Simon goes over the rather complicated drum parts for each section. Again, he takes full advantage of his big kit, and his patterns are original. He ends the tape with a very impressive performance of the song with the band.

While watching Simon and company put together this video, it was clear that everyone involved was determined to come up with a quality product. Obviously Simon had a clear vision of what he wanted to achieve with this video, and by the looks of it, he's done just that!

William F. Miller

# Vic Firth

## swings with 3 Generations of Jazz



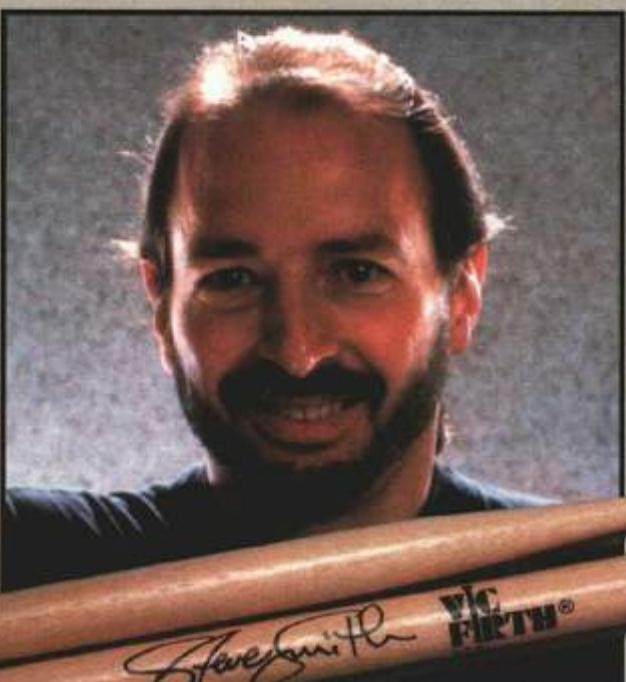
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# Backing Club Acts

■ by Robert Coxon

Reading music means different things to different people. And just because you can read Ted Reed's *Progressive Steps To Syncopation* from cover to cover, it doesn't necessarily mean you can sightread even the simplest chart while backing an act at your local club. To sightread a chart on stage, under lights, and in front of an audience requires additional skills to those learned in the practice room. Let's take a look at some of the things you might want to be aware of when you're called to back a club act.

## The Talk-Through

In most clubs, time and money simply do not allow for sufficient rehearsal time. The talk-through before the show may very well be the only chance you'll actually get to see the music, get a feel for the act, and iron out any problems. It's also important that you be honest with artists you're backing. If you haven't had a lot of experience backing acts, tell them. Quite often they'll spend more time talking you through the drum parts. They may even vary their routine slightly, perhaps leaving out one or two difficult numbers that may be a bit too risky to try without a live rehearsal. More importantly, the act will be mentally prepared if something does go wrong. And if you've been honest with them upfront, they're more likely to thank and encourage you, rather than tear you up after the show.

As the talk-through progresses, make careful note of any tricky areas. Your first priority should be to look over the "road map" of each chart: the first and second endings, other repeats, codas, and tempo or feel changes. *And don't hesitate to ask if something is not clear.* As you finish talking through the first tune, lay the chart open, face down, on a table or chair. Continue to place each chart on top of the other face down, so that by the end of the talk-through, your music will be arranged in the correct order of performance and ready to be placed on your music stand.

Two- or three-page charts usually fit quite easily on most music stands. Of course, charts with four or more pages will have to be folded over, and pages will need to be turned during the performance. Work out the best possible way to fold the charts beforehand, and try your best to avoid having to turn back to repeat signs. The reason it's so important to have the music ready on the stand is that quite often songs are segued (played back-to-back with little or no time in between). In those situations, there's hardly enough time to grab the finished chart, drop it to the floor, and be ready to start into the next one.

During the talk-through, the artist should indicate which

songs are segued and if there are any "chasers." A chaser is a piece of theme music played at the end of an artist's act to signal that the performance is over. A "false chaser" is the same thing, but it's played one or two numbers *before* the end of the act. It's simply a means of staging an encore. (Unfortunately, many club acts wouldn't get an encore any other way!)

It should also be established during the talk-through who's responsible for count-offs, cut-offs, and any other important musical cues. Many artists handle this themselves. Others prefer to bring in their own musical director, who is generally a pianist (but frequently a guitarist or drummer). Usually the musical director conducts the talk-through, and you simply follow his directions during the show. Other times, the task will fall on a band member. If the band has a leader, it's *his* job. If it's a pickup band, then the job is up for grabs. In this situation, the most experienced player should take the responsibility.

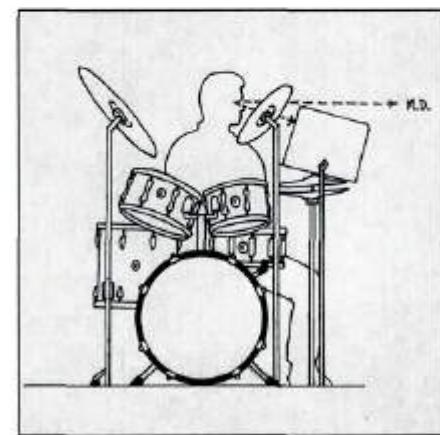
## Setting Up

First, be prepared and bring along a music stand. This may seem obvious, but many drummers simply assume that music stands will be provided by the club, which is not necessarily the case. Also be prepared to tackle any musical situation. Along with your sticks, bring along mallets, brushes, a cowbell, a woodblock, and a mark-tree if you have one.

Having already arranged the music in the proper order, we now have to place the music stand in the best possible position. Remember, not only do you have to read the chart, you also have to watch the artist and/or the musical director. It's always best to position your music so that the musical director's eyes meet yours just above the top of the chart. "With a minimum of eye movement, you can read the chart while watching for directions from the musical director.

Quite often, cymbals and even drums have to be rearranged to accomplish this. I use a standard five-piece kit with two toms mounted on the bass drum. My ride cymbal is to my right, above the larger mounted tom, and at a playable angle. This poses no problem if I simply need to watch the act out front, or when the musical director is to my *left*. The music is placed above the hi-hat cymbals, and as close to the front as possible.

However, if the musical director is also the pianist, most times the piano will be to the *right* of the drums so that the pianist's right hand is nearest the audience. This calls for a reverse setup. In this situation the music should be placed above the floor tom, but this usually



leaves the ride cymbal in the way. In this case, I'll remove the largest mounted tom and lower the level of the ride cymbal. Though I'm not particularly comfortable playing this way, the most important requirement is to be able to "eyeball" the musical director.

Another consideration is being sure that the area surrounding the kit is cleared of things like drinks, spare drums, and towels so that the completed charts can be pulled off the music stand and dropped to the floor quickly and neatly.



### Showtime

When an artist is introduced, the introduction of the tune usually provides enough time for the artist to get to the microphone at center stage and to begin his act. If you have to count off the first number, the artist will often give you the correct tempo from his off-stage position. Perfectly timing the end of the stage introduction with the start of the music can be a challenge. The trick to doing this is to count off the opening tune *under* the stage announcement—not after it. For example:

"Ladies and gentlemen, put your hands together for

Mister.....Guy.....Smiley."

Countoff: 1.....2.....1.....2.....3.....4.....1  
Music

One final but *essential* point: When the artist is on stage, so are you. If the artist is telling jokes or talking to the audience, never yawn, roll your eyes, or carry on a conversation with another band member. Be professional and look interested. Laugh at the jokes, even if the last six acts you've backed have told the same ones. That's showbiz!

Even when an act is less than memorable, it's still a challenge to back them and to do the best job you can. True, it's drumming by the seat of your pants, but it's always interesting, and even the worst disaster can make for a good story a few years later!



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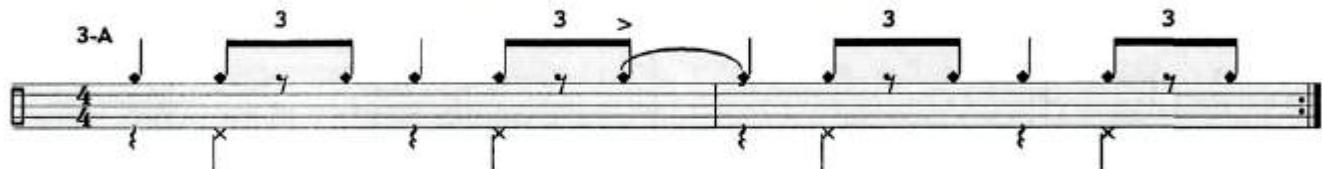
# Advanced Timekeeping: Part 3

■ by Rick Mattingly



Our first two articles dealt with getting away from the standard "ding dinga-ding" jazz ride-cymbal pattern and moving towards a freer way of timekeeping. So far we've looked at different one- and two-bar patterns, all of which maintained a constant quarter-note pulse, with the location of the swung 8th notes being the element that was used to vary the pattern.

Another way of adding interest to the timekeeping, and producing a more modern feel, is by anticipating the beats, which is accomplished by accenting the swung 8th note and then leaving out the following on-the-beat note. For example, in the following two-bar pattern, we are going to anticipate the downbeat of the second measure, in effect, playing it "early."



We can apply this same idea to the other three main beats in a 4/4 bar, as in the examples below.

Generally, you won't want to anticipate a beat in every bar, as that could start to sound choppy, so that's why the above examples are presented as two-bar patterns. But to create a momentary tension in the music, you could certainly anticipate as many beats as you wish, as often as you wish, ultimately releasing the tension by returning to a more straight-ahead type of timekeeping.

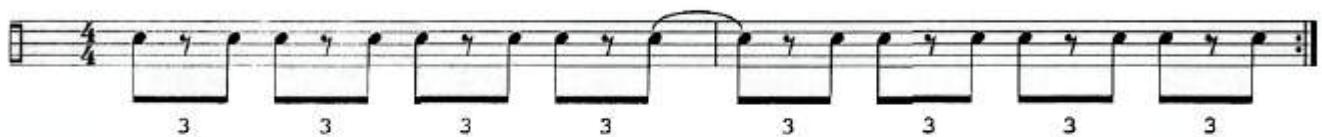
The biggest danger with anticipating beats is the tendency to play the following beat early. Therefore, when first working on this type of playing, use a metronome to keep your quarter notes consistent. Swing comes from the way you place the swung 8th notes, not by rushing or dragging your underlying quarter-note pulse. So you shouldn't feel that using a metronome will give you a stiff time-feel.

Practice the above patterns until you feel fairly comfortable with them. Then use the rhythms shown below to develop coordination between the ride cymbal, snare drum, and bass drum.

But don't play these patterns exactly as written. Adapt each one to the cymbal pattern you are working on. For example, suppose you were going to practice the following pattern on snare drum.



When you play it with Ride Pattern 3-A, leave out the note on the downbeat of the second measure, just as you are doing on the cymbal.



With that in mind, work out the following snare/bass patterns with Ride Patterns 3A-3D.

By working out the patterns in this article, as well as the ride patterns in the two previous articles, you should now be able to engage in a freer type of timekeeping than just the standard "ding dinga-ding." Ultimately, you can get away from playing repetitive patterns at all, breaking up the time at will. Always remember, though, to keep a consistent, steady flow. You can break up the time, but don't let it break down!



continued from page 35

think about how I can blend in with everyone else. Can I hear the piano? Can I hear the bass? Can they hear me? The sonic, aural standpoint. Everything else after that is making music. If it's someone I've never played with, I have to see where they place the beat, how they phrase.

**KM:** You have an easygoing attitude.

Does that help you get more work?

**LN:** I think whenever you play, if you're always honest, the *you* part is always going to come out. There are as many different views of music as there are players. No two people think exactly alike, so there's always some give-and-take going on, I don't care what anybody says. *Always*. I would hate to think I'm just this piece of clay that can be molded into how someone thinks the music should sound. But, I'm always open to the views of other people about how they want their music to sound and feel, without sacrificing my own views.

**KM:** But don't some leaders say, "You're the drummer, you know what to play"?

**LN:** Some people know exactly what they

want to hear and some don't. Some people need for you to be more assertive. Others still want your input, but there is a smaller parameter to which you can contribute.

**KM:** You have to know how to gauge it.

**LN:** Right, and the wider your scope of music, rhythms, grooves, feels, and harmonies, the more prepared you'll be to give the music what it needs. Some people may tell you they don't like what you're playing. Others won't say anything even if they don't like it. You have to be musical enough to hear, or feel from their vibes—you have to be very sensitive. And "sensitive" doesn't mean "timid." You have to know what to play at the right time.

**KM:** You don't mind saying that you'll go out of your way to give someone what they want?

**LN:** I read an interview with Joe Henderson recently where he was saying he'll try to give the composer or leader even more of what they want. On the chart it may ask for a specific feeling or approach. It doesn't mean you just try to give them a certain amount of that and

no more. You want to give them so much they didn't even know it could sound like that. I really like that. That's a great way to approach other people's music. You give a hundred percent of yourself.

**KM:** Who was the first drummer to really floor you?

**LN:** Art Blakey. The first guy who I identified with jazz, with the swing feeling, was Grady Tate. When I was about 16, I would go to this movie theater in Arizona. At intermission they'd play Quincy Jones' *Walking In Space* record, which features Freddie Hubbard, Rahsaan Roland Kirk, and Grady Tate. "Killer Joe" is one of the tracks. I just liked that feel.

A friend of mine, Alan Chase, ran a record store, and he recommended other people to me, like Philly Joe Jones and Art Blakey. He sold me *Blue Trane* [John Coltrane], which has Philly Joe Jones, Paul Chambers, and Curtis Fuller. I got Miles' *Milestones and Round About Midnight*—Philly Joe again. Then Art Blakey's *Live At Birdland Vols. I and II*. Philly Joe was great, but Art's power and ferociousness got to me. After that, I

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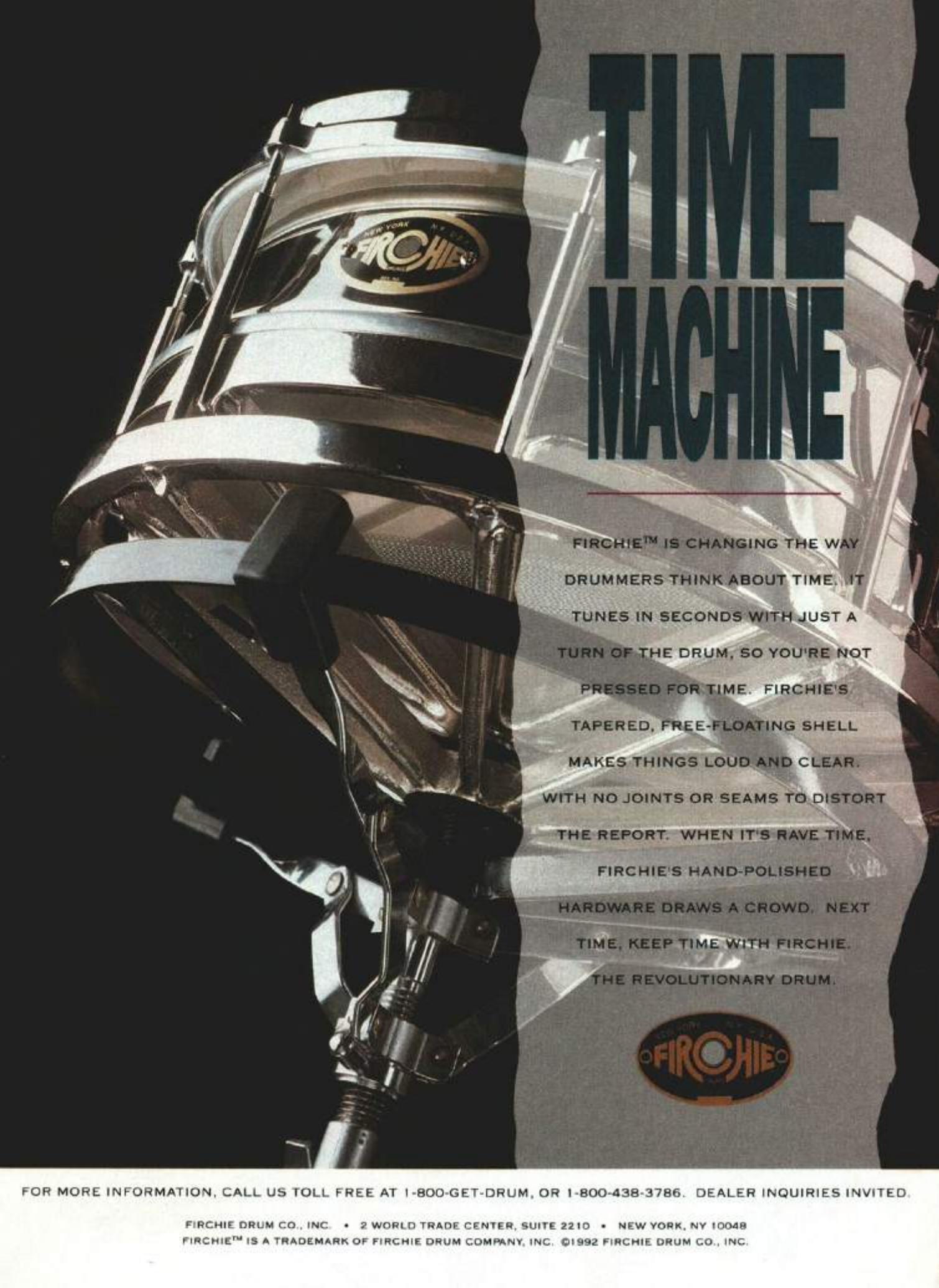
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started reading everything about jazz that I could get a hold of, just to learn. Between the ages of 17 and 20 I went on a binge of trying to find out as much about jazz and jazz drummers as I could. **KM:** Why should an aspiring jazz drummer bother searching out records with Charlie Persip, Albert "Tootie" Heath, Mickey Roker, and Art Taylor? "Why not jump straight into Philly Joe Jones, Elvin Jones, Jack DeJohnette, and Tony Williams?

**LN:** There are as many views of drumming as there are drummers. No matter how related or dissimilar they may be, there are always some differences in their approaches. I could tell you so many things I've learned from the so-called "lesser" drummers—people like Bruno Carr and Freddie Waits, who was my teacher. He instilled in me the discipline of making sure that what I played came across to the audience the same way as I heard it in my mind. I would record myself often to check that my execution was clear.

**KM:** What do you practice?

**LN:** I do triplets just to loosen up my

hands. I move the accents around, drop them in different places. My only routine is that I always play triplets, since that feel is so inherent to jazz. Then I do single strokes to work on clarity of the stroke and definition, then double strokes and flam taps.

**KM:** More than many of the current players that I've seen, you really let the stick do most of the work when playing the ride cymbal. How did you develop your emphasis on rebound?

**LN:** I worked on getting my ride playing to the point where I could clearly hear each beat—to relax my hand so it wasn't a stiff-sounding feel. I use a lot of finger control. I spent a lot of time recording myself playing the ride cymbal. I wanted to be able to get the 2 and 4 feeling of the hi-hat, without exaggerating it. I wanted the definition of the stroke to be so strong and clear that no one would miss the hi-hat if I didn't play it. I would sit down with just the ride cymbal, my sticks, and a tape recorder and play at different tempos.

**KM:** How did you develop playing fast tempos on the ride cymbal?

**LN:** My first big gig was with Betty Carter, who loves fast tempos. We would play something really burning for fifteen or twenty minutes straight. People say it all the time, but when playing fast, you have to relax. If you tense up, it won't work. And it helps to warm up. Otherwise, it's like trying to run a sprint with cold muscles. The next thing is to find the balance or fulcrum point that's most comfortable for you, and that allows the stick to work *for* you. If you're trying to play each stroke with your wrist, you'll have problems. Use the rebound. If the stick is bouncing, you only have to play the downbeats. So at a really fast tempo, if your downbeats on 2 and 4 are really strong, you won't have to worry about making 1 and 3 as pronounced as you would at a slower tempo, where they need to be more even.

**KM:** How has your playing evolved from the Betty Carter gig?

**LN:** I'm more confident in taking chances and more assured in just playing the ride cymbal beat. When people say a drummer is "experienced," they can hear that he's assured and secure about

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what he's playing. The evolution of my playing reflects working with great bassists, and just the experience of playing the instrument all the time for so many years.

**KM:** What's it like to play with a musician like Ron Carter?

**LN:** Great musicians always let you know how much you have together and how much you *don't* have together. They don't have to say anything. All they need to do is play. They can humble you or inspire you.

I played with Sonny Rollins once in Florida. He played "Tenor Madness" for over forty minutes. He traded fours with me for close to half an hour. First of all, trading fours with anybody for that long is a challenge. But doing it with Sonny Rollins, I was thinking after fifteen minutes, "I can't do anything else!" What can you possibly play differently from the last four? But he played so much rhythmic variation in four bars, it was inspiring.

**KM:** How do some of the great musicians you've worked with differ?

**LN:** I played a week at the Blue Note with Milt Jackson. You can't bash with Bags. His ear is so refined, he can hear everything you play very clearly. You don't have to over-emphasize. It doesn't mean playing lightly or timidly. People get confused about not playing heavy. There are occasions for that. With Sonny I had to play a lot harder energy-wise. He's really powerful, and he uses an electric band.

**KM:** How does playing with Sonny Rollins compare with Branford Marsalis?

**LN:** Sonny's one of our masters. I can't compare. With Milt Jackson and Tommy Flanagan it's more subtle. You have to really listen to what they're playing and almost match timbres. I played harder with Sonny, with the big band, with Branford, with the George Adams/Don Pullen quartet...they're all heavy hitting situations. The great players let you know what you need to focus on in making the music swing or have shape and color...feeling...emotion. Just being on stage with people like Jimmy Heath or Dizzy is *enough*.

**KM:** When you came to New York from Arizona, did you have to change your style in any way?

**LN:** Certain people like a freer approach to playing the drums. But it takes a certain sense of security to let go and not keep the time going and trust that everyone is with you—that *their* time is strong enough to let you improvise more freely. I've spent so much time making sure that the groove and the definition of the beat is strong that it's a challenge for me to play open and free.

On "Lonely Woman" [from Branford Marsalis's *Random Abstract*] I got to do that. Or with George Adams and Don Pullen—no tempo, no time. It takes an ear for establishing a certain rhythmic motif and then getting out of that. That doesn't mean playing time. Elvin Jones is a perfect example of someone who can play open drum solos, going from one rhythm to another, but it doesn't mean he's playing *time*, per se. I'm more attuned to that approach of playing rhythms than I am to playing *totally* free.

**KM:** Are you a natural musician or a hard worker?

**LN:** A combination of the two. It's hard to break it down. I had to fine-tune my technique. I practiced up to eight hours a day

at one point when I was 19 or 20. The feeling was always there, though. I used to like to dance a lot.

**KM:** So Lewis, why drums in the first place?

**LN:** Well, Ken.. I got my first set at ten. But I was banging earlier than that—the typical story, hitting boxes and stuff in the backyard. There was a kid in the fourth grade who knew I liked drums. He invited me down to check out the orchestra. I joined the band, got the big 2B sticks—just like in kindergarten, when they give you those big giant pencils! [laughs] I played from the fourth through the eighth grades, finally getting to the advanced band, and I played in concert band in high school. I was a good reader at a young age. For fun I was playing along with James Brown records, jamming on funk with friends in the garage. Then I finally heard *Walking In Space*. I got serious after high school and went to Arizona State. They had a jazz program, which allowed me to work on my playing in student bands while I was fervently listening to and reading about anything to do with jazz. It was an accelerated learning process.

**KM:** Were you starting to play out then?

**LN:** Yes. I got hired by a pianist in Phoenix, a local legend named Charles Lewis—"Mr. Arizona jazz" in a way. We played straight-ahead and a lot of Latin. He made me aware of the different Latin rhythms. He was comping on the piano with his right hand and playing timbales with his left. He also made me aware of the Wynton Kelly trio and the Oscar Peterson trio.

**KM:** After that?

**LN:** Then I worked with an important arranger named Prince Sherrill. He had a huge record collection, just like Kenny Washington's. He'd let me tape boxes of music. He really tuned

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me in to where the music was without my having to be in New York.

**KM:** So were you studying with someone in Phoenix?

**LN:** There was a guy named Dave Cook who played these amazing shuffles. He was the first guy I heard live who had the real feeling of a jazz drummer. That's when I really concentrated on groove and feeling. I would study with Freddie Waits when he came through Phoenix and also when I came to New York in the summer of '79. And in college, although I was a business major, I entered the jazz program. I played in the big band and got to read a lot of charts. Now I wish I had been a music major; I could've gained a lot more knowledge.

At the same time, I was starting to play with name musicians who would come through town. I played with Sonny Stitt for a week once. He played this incredibly fast version of "Cherokee." I also got to play with Red Garland, Art Pepper, Barney Kessel, Lee Konitz, Slide Hampton, Jimmy Witherspoon, and Scott Hamilton. There was a real scene in Phoenix at that time.

**KM:** So you made the decision in college to dedicate yourself totally to music?

**LN:** Yes. I wasn't sure for a while. There were a lot of variables involved. I was on a full academic scholarship. I graduated high school with honors...there was a lot expected of me. I wasn't thinking of being a jazz musician at that point. But I knew that I loved playing the drums and I loved music. So I changed my direction to music.

**KM:** Were your parents supportive?

**LN:** They had faith in me. They knew my decision was based on something that I had thoroughly thought out.

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**KM:** They didn't warn you about being a jazz musician? "You'll never make a living...."

**LN:** No. It might have been because they didn't know about the "jazz world" or any of those myths about drug addicts. They knew I would do well.

At that time I joined the Keith Greco trio. I played with him for two years, five nights a week, playing Ellington, standards...! got ample solo space. Playing in the trio, working with visiting musicians, playing in the school bands, and studying with Freddie [Waits] all helped me to decide to pursue music professionally. It was Freddie who recommended me to Betty Carter. That was in 1981. I made a couple of rehearsals, and the next thing you know I'm with her at Blues Alley in D.C., then a few weeks later I'm in Europe. It was like a whirlwind. All my preparation primed me for that gig.

**KM:** Who were the drummers you were emulating up to that point?

**LN:** The guys I "microscoped," as people call it, were Max Roach—his solos and phrasing were so clear—and Philly Joe Jones for his clear phrasing, the shape of his solos, and his creativity. I liked Art Blakey and Jimmy Cobb for the groove. Roy Haynes had a kind of fire and crispness I really like. I wasn't into Billy Higgins as much then as I am now. He is one of the few drummers of that level who is still around. You can still hear him play.

I would play with records like *Live At The Blackhawk*, *Milestones*, and *"Four" And More*. I went through Ted Reed's *Syncope*, focusing on the triplet section, and Stone's *Stick Control* for hands. Then I would just play—soloing, putting Charlie Parker tunes on the drums, playing freely from 3/4 to 4/4 to 6/4 to Latin to swing—just playing for hours. I even got together with Andrew Cyrille at one point just to hear him describe what he did, how to play so freely. I was just absorbing everything I could.

**KM:** So how long were you with Betty Carter?

**LN:** Four years, from '80 to '84. Betty likes to try different things. She would encourage me to not sound like someone else. She'll take a tune known to be in four, and she'll try it in three, five, seven, a Latin feel—anything to get another view. I really learned shading and coloring with her.

**KM:** After Betty?

**LN:** After Betty I came to New York and started free-lancing. I did Ron Carter's group for a couple of years, then Branford Marsalis's band from '86 to '88. We did an album and a couple of videos.

I came to New York without delusions of grandeur about getting a record deal or making a huge name for myself. I just wanted to play jazz with these great people who I had heard on records and who I had read so much about. There wasn't this huge media attention in New York at that time. Dexter Gordon had just come back from Europe. Art Blakey was hiring younger musicians. Betty was on her own small label. It was a different time. The loft scene was happening then, too. Stylistically the range was pretty wide, but I wanted to refine this swing thing. I think all of us—Victor Lewis, Marvin Smith, Tony Reedus—we all came to New York hoping to play with great people and to get our playing together for the music.

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# The Presence Of Heart

■ by Andrew Kollmorgen

When you consider what it takes to stay above water and survive as a working musician, it's no surprise that your inspiration—the deepest source of your desire to play—can take a battering over the years. Inevitably, the wear and tear shows up in your playing. It occurs especially when you find yourself drumming a lot under strictly mercenary conditions, doing a piece of business with a high degree of indifference all around. Of course, the converse of this—a total absence of gainful work—can be equally damaging. Drumming is a spiritual pursuit, and its continuing vitality is often at odds with the methods and motives of the music industry. Effectively dealing with the problem, I can tell you firsthand, is no day at the beach.

The day-to-day working life of the freelance musician can breed a certain complacency and lack of luster without our fully realizing it. The scary part is how easy it sets in. We can end up limiting ourselves to our standard repertoire of beats and fills without breaking much new ground from year to year.

It's hard to guide the evolution of one's talent steadily upward, and harder still to properly evolve and make a living at the same time. But growth is the key to sustaining inspiration. And we have to willfully encourage this growth while contending with a gigging environment that does not always seem to reward the effort.

All this hit home for me at, of course, the worse possible time. It was during a jingle session, and I was rattled in mid-groove by that less-than-thrilled engineer's voice: "Could you play with...uh...a little more conviction?" An awkward moment passed before I could respond with the can-do assurance obligatory in studio work. In my earlier days I'd always been

one to bring down the plaster with the passion and fury I unleashed on my silver sparkle Ludwigs. And I certainly hadn't relinquished that spirit of my own free will. So I took charge of that jingle groove with every speck of conviction I could muster—which at that point was a considerable amount.

The improvement (which the engineer kindly demonstrated during playback) was unmistakable. It was further substantiation of a principle employed throughout the recording world: It's not only what you play, but *how* you play it. Any number of drummers can play the same part and interpret elements like intensity and articulation in as many ways. One individual with average chops can lay down a monster groove with a mile-deep pocket, while another player deftly commands his sticks but does not produce the same earth-rumbling results. Some of it has to do with concentration—giving yourself over completely to the music. But, ultimately, it's the degree of inspiration—the presence of heart—that divides the solid groove player from the mere technician.

Finding your way back to the wellsprings of what inspired you to play in the first place is not always an odyssey of joy. Taking fresh angles of approach to the drumset, for one thing, can exact more patience than many of us have at our immediate disposal. You have to drop your sticks and forget everything you know. But these are necessary steps in the reclamation of our spiritual integrity.

And it's not all toil. It was of crucial importance—in my case anyway—to take the time to seriously listen to music again. I needed to reclaim the emotional fervor of my musically formative years, back when the music I loved had its deepest affect and my heart first aspired to some idea of

greatness. We should all take inventory of our real feelings about drumming and reacquaint ourselves with the virtues of relaxation and having fun.

Most of all, though, we have to think of ourselves as artists in the best and purest sense of the word. Maybe our professional lives don't exactly size up to the grand visions that inspired our beginnings. Maybe we have to sometimes surrender our taste and ideas to those of the producer at hand. Or maybe our hair just wasn't vertical enough for the last audition and the forecast on the work front looks bleak. But none of the trials and pitfalls that lie in the natural course of a drummer's career should be allowed to diminish our intrinsic value as artists. And we have to bear this in mind whether or not anyone else does.

**"We have to think of ourselves as artists in the best and purest sense of the word."**



Finding a good gig is a process hampered by all manner of non-musical rigmarole, and our artistic well-being, if we're not careful, can get short-shrifted. The love of playing has to be nurtured—whatever the working climate might be. No one can really afford to overlook the attentions our instrument demands—if, that is, you care to partake of its greatest glories.

*Andrew Kollmorgen is a busy New York-based studio and touring drummer. His playing can be heard on dozens of jingles, including those for Showtime, Nike footwear, and Sterling Optical, and his live work includes the Peter Noone band and New York City band One-Two-Three.*

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## PAS Day At Drummers Collective

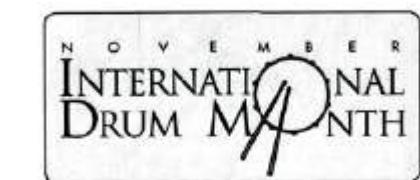
On May 9, 1992, Drummers Collective in New York City sponsored a day-long event in conjunction with the Percussive Arts Society. The purpose was to focus on drumset education in the U.S. and how it might be improved on all levels. The day began with a panel discussion to both introduce and examine the topic. Representatives from virtually every form of percussion education were on hand, including Steve Beck (administrative director, PAS), Rob Wallis (DCI Video), Bob Breithaupt (Capitol University, Ohio), Ed Soph (Univ. of North Texas), Ed Uribe (Berklee College, Boston), Justin DiCioccio (Manhattan School of Music and LaGuardia High School of the Arts, New York), Michael Lawrence (Drummers Collective), Frank Marino (Long Island Drum Center), and Rick Van Horn (*Modern Drummer*). These individuals shared their views on academic, vocation-

al, commercial, and private instruction, and answered questions from the audience of drummers present.

Following the panel discussion, Bob Breithaupt delivered a presentation on the history of drumming in America, and Ed Soph presented a clinic on jazz drumming and improvisation. The enthusiasm of all the participants in the day's activities prompted Drummers Collective director John Castellano to comment, "The event was one that we are very proud to have hosted. It proved to me once again that there are many people out there who feel very deeply about our industry and the quality of education existing within it."

## International Drum Month

November 1992 is the first International Drum Month, a cooperative promotional activity among the music industry, the



media, and the Sustaining Members of the Percussive Arts Society. Its object is to promote awareness of and interest in drums and percussion, and in turn to create new participation in the drum market. A national radio-station network, and radio merchandise tie-ins for promotional purposes are being arranged. Buttons, special merchandise price tags, T-shirts, and other items carrying the IDM logo will be available to music dealers to help them take part in the promotional effort. The logo is the creation of Wendy Shumaker, of Newport, PA, and was chosen from entrants in a contest introduced at the 1991 PAS convention. Individuals interested in further information about International Drum Month should contact the program's administrator, Jerry

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## Pro-Mark And Elvis Make History

In the same year that Elvis Presley has been immortalized on a U.S. postage stamp, Pro-Mark Drumsticks has been celebrating its 35th anniversary. These two seemingly unrelated events recently



set Pro-Mark president Herb Brochstein to reminiscing about the part he played in Elvis's success.

"One day in 1955," recalls Herb, "a pink Cadillac pulled up in front of my shop, and in walked Elvis, his drummer, DJ. Fontana, and bassist Bill Black. This was before Elvis had really been 'discovered.' They were interested in a new drumset, but Elvis wasn't impressed with any I had on the floor. So I showed him my personal set, which had a front bass drum head made of unborn calf skin with the hair unshaven. Elvis decided to buy it then and there.

"Some months later," continues Herb, "Life magazine featured a two-page spread on Elvis's debut on the *Ed Sullivan Show*. And right behind Elvis was DJ. Fontana, playing my drums—unshaven drumhead and all! DJ. used that kit for several more TV and nightclub appearances as Elvis rose to stardom in the late '50s.

"It's nice to know," Herb concludes, "that in some small way I've been involved with making musical history twice: first

with Elvis, and now with Pro-Mark's 35th anniversary. The music business is full of surprises!"

## Rhythm For Life Established

Remo Belli (president of Remo, Inc.), Mickey Hart (drummer for the Grateful Dead and author of *Drumming At The Edge Of Magic* and *Planet Drum*), the National Association of Music Merchants (NAMM), and the National Association of Music Therapists (NAMT) have jointly created Rhythm For Life. The goals of this organization are to raise funds for both the creation of public awareness and the research of music therapy using drumming and the effect of drumming on the well-being of human beings. The incentive for Rhythm For Life has been the interest in "drum circles" formed for fun, religious reasons, emotional outlets, management training, etc. by people of all walks of life and all ages. These groups transcend traditional "drummers" as the



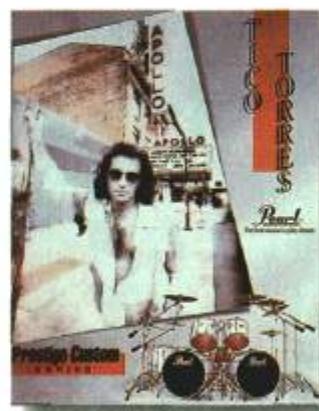
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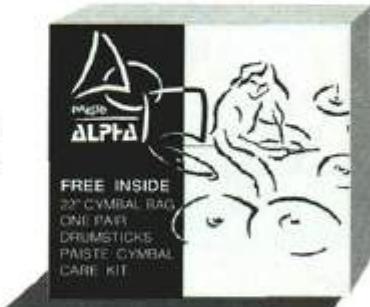
Quite simply, we sent each one of them a complete set of Alpha's and let them know what the retail price was - no influence, no gentle persuasion, just the cymbals (ask them!). Since we couldn't have said anything better, we decided

to simply print what they said.

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industry has known them, and instead involve "anyone who wants to grab a drum and play"—for their own personal enjoyment or benefit.

On February 28, Rhythm For Life hosted the world's largest drum circle at the College of Marin, in California. Hosted by Arthur Hull, Mickey Hart, Sheila E., and others, 1,700 drummers of all ages and backgrounds came together to play hand drums and other percussion instruments sheerly for the communal joy of doing so.

In addition to its role as a founder of Rhythm For Life, Remo, Inc., has become directly involved in this movement by expanding its product line to include many new "World Percussion" instruments, and by setting up workshops with noted experts in this field such as Arthur Hull, John Bergamo, and Glen Velez. Information on Rhythm For Life can be obtained through Remo, Inc., 12804 Raymer St., No. Hollywood, CA 91604.

## Endorser News

Gary Wallis, Dougie Vipond, Steve White, and Geoff Dunn are using Vater

sticks.

Artists using Danmar Percussion products include Walfredo Reyes, Jr., Larry Mullen, Jr., Doane Perry, Joe Franco, John "J.R." Robinson, Joe Matoza, Andy James, and Rafael Gayol.

"Doc" Gibbs, Tony Cintron, John Ferraro, and Dio Saucedo now play with Cappella sticks.

**Dick Cully** and **Chad Rager** are endorsing Slingerland drums.

New KAT artists include Neil Peart, Rod Morgenstein, Billy Cobham, Blas Elias, Chester Thompson, Kevin Cloud, Dave Samuels, and Jacob Armen.

Percussionist Sue Hadjopoulos now endorses Gon Bops percussion, Gibraltar hardware, Zildjian cymbals, Rhythm Tech products, and Futuresonics ear monitors.

Pat O'Donnell, Glen Graham, Del Gray, John "Vatos" Hernandez, Jimmy Lowe, and Billy Johnson using Pro-Mark drumsticks and accessories.

A list of artists who have joined Paiste's ranks includes: Elaine Harris, James Gadsen, Charlie Adams, John Dittrich, Brooks Wackerman, Juan Escovedo,

Mingo Lewis, Roger Earl, Alan Estes, Bob Zimmitti, David Palmer, Scott Travis, Gumbi Ortiz, Babe Pace, Joe Leroux, Michael Katz, Ernie Durawa, Eddie Drayton, Yael Benzaken, J.D. Blair, Bobby Fernandez, Larry McCracken, Henry Newmark, Ralph Kinsey, Michael Lunden, Hillary Jones, and Siggy Baldursson.

Pork Pie Percussion welcomes Colin Sears, Dimitri Matisis, Garey Williams, Aaron Harris, Brain, Tim "Herb" Alexander, Jim Carnelli, Tony Jones, Joe Seemayer, and Bill Detamore.

Drummers now endorsing Zildian sticks are Joey Kramer, Rick Allen, Luis Conte, John "J.R." Robinson, Eddie Bayers, Eric Singer, Alan White, Nigel Olsson, Clay Caire, Rodney Holmes, Jimmy Chalfant, Jimmy DeGrasso, James Kottak, Frank Celenza, Curt Bisquera, J.T. Lewis, Dave Stefanelli, Dallas Taylor, Steve Wacholz, Chris Blackwell, David Early, and Chuck Silverman.

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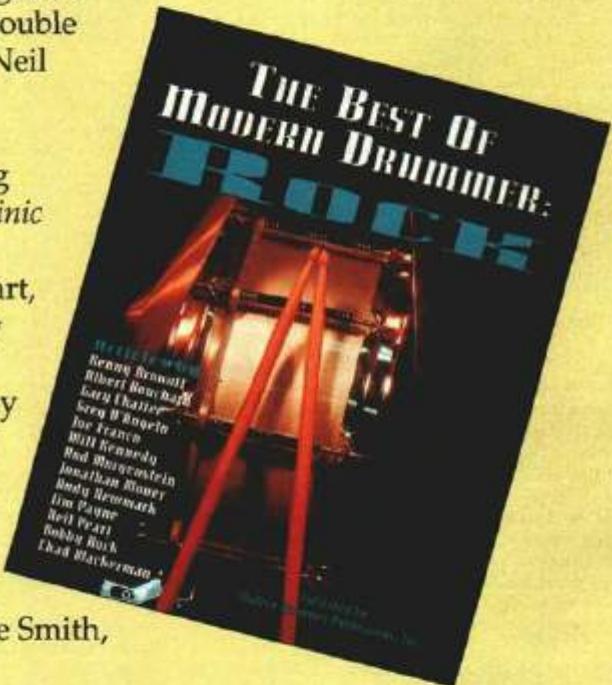
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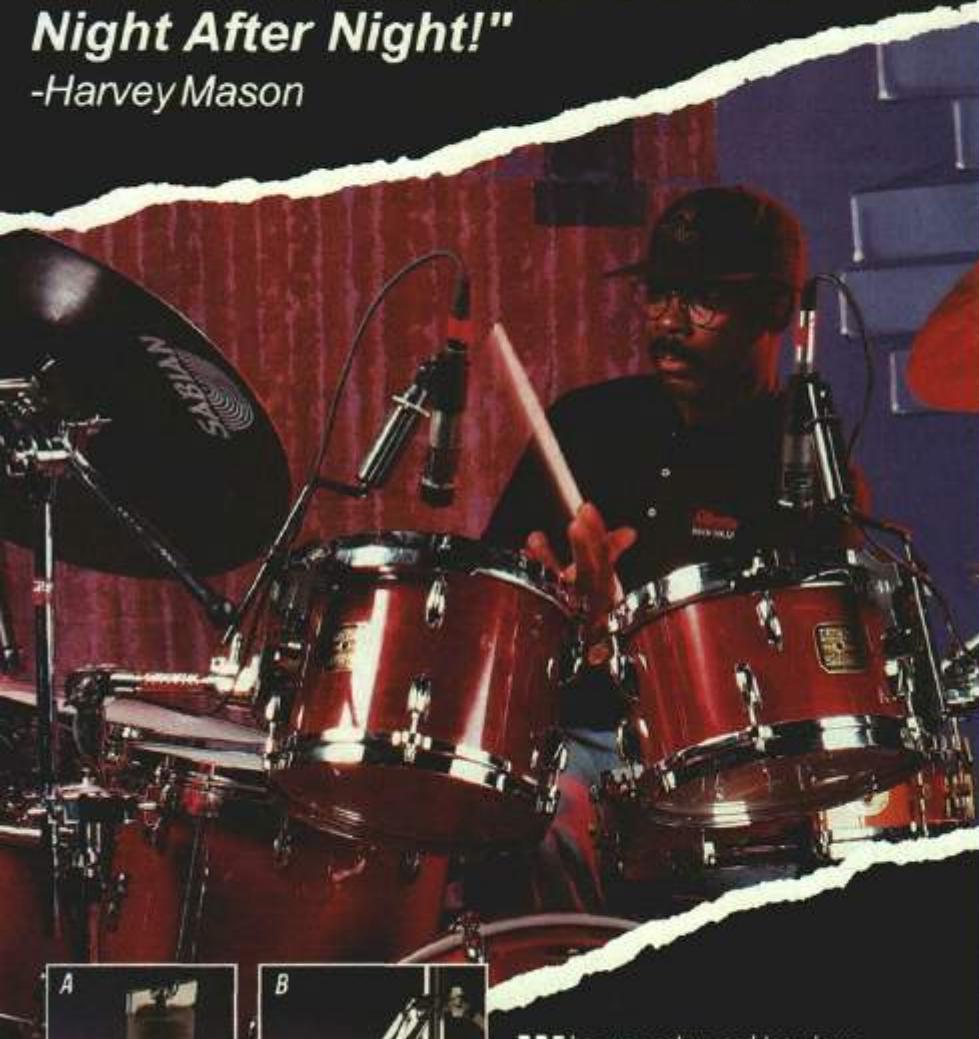
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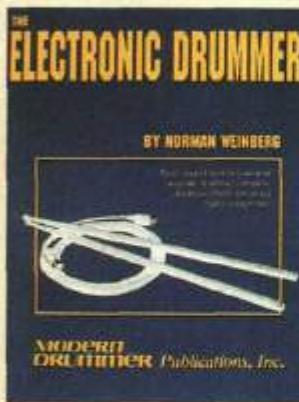
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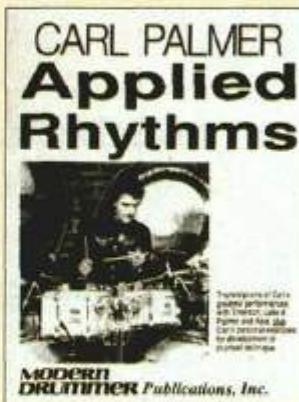
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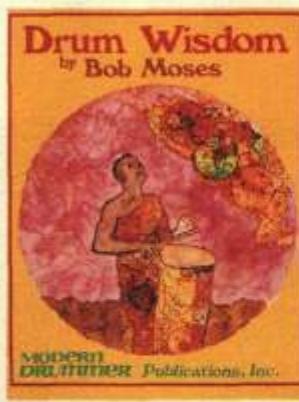
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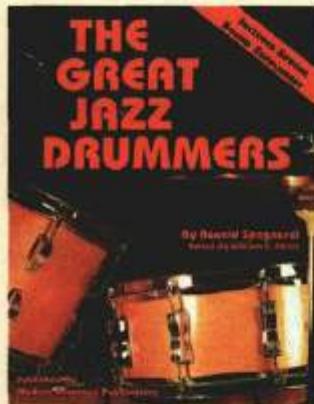
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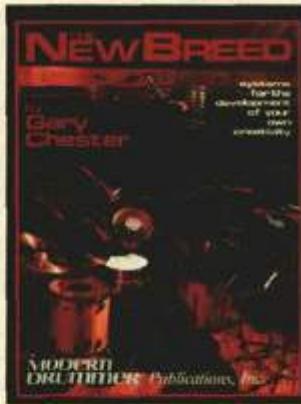
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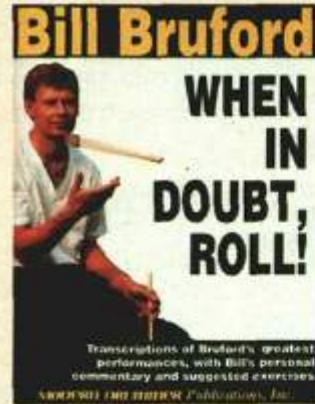
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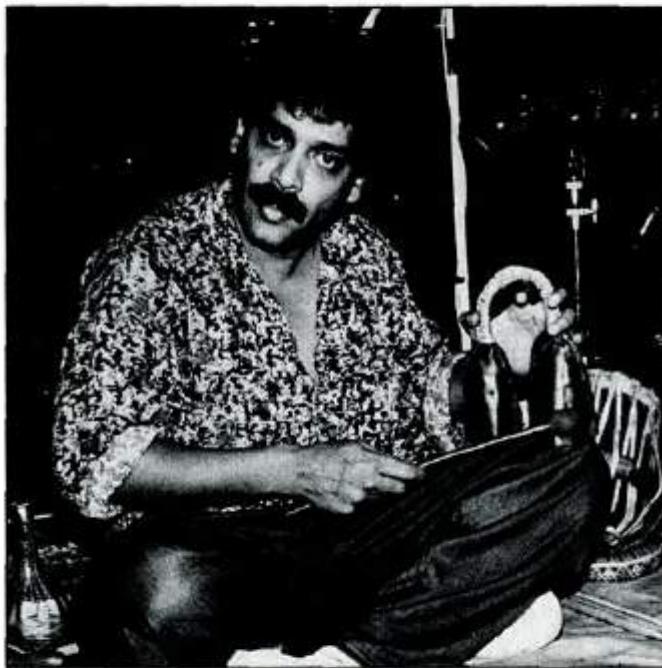
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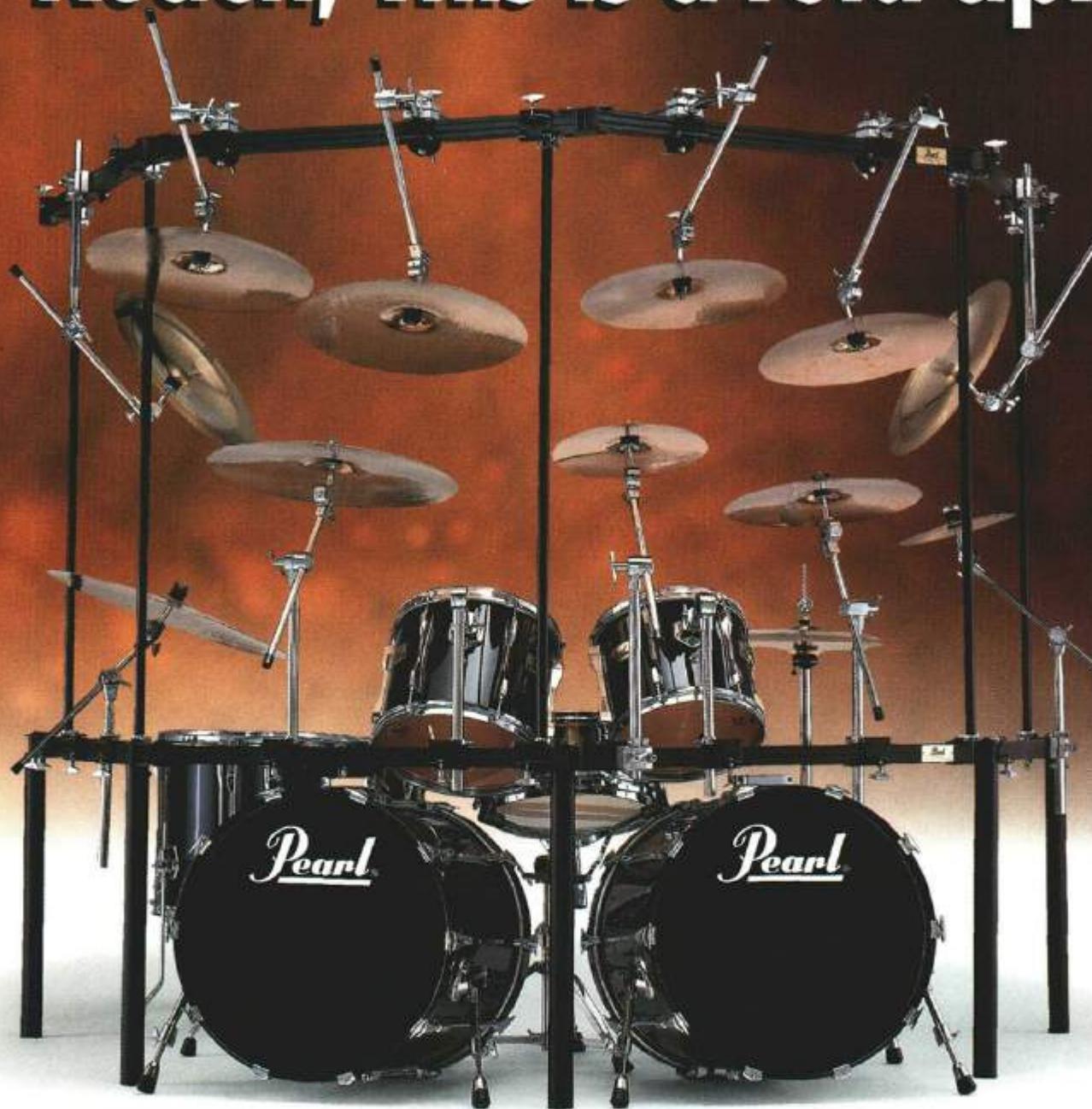
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What a great concept. But what if it were also expandable by adding as many sides as you want, and black anodized for toughness and lightweight yet rock solid sturdy. What an awesome concept. But wait, there's more. What if you could also add a cymbal rack, with all these same advantages. Wow, where can I get one would be your obvious response. At your local Pearl dealer would be ours.

**Pearl.**  
The best reason to play drums.

The above kit features the Pearl DR-100 Drum Rack with one extension and the CR-100 Cymbal Rack also with one extension. For more information see your local Pearl dealer or write to: Pearl Corporation, Dept. Rack Info., 549 Metroplex Dr., Nashville, TN 37211. Please include \$3 postage / handling.



LARS ULRICH, METALLICA.

“I HATE ADVERTISING.  
BUT I LIKE ZILDJIANS.”

*“When it comes down to it, it’s all about simplicity, groove and attitude.*

*And when it really comes down to it, there is no other cymbal than Zildjian.”*

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